

B. Stratford,

THE
PLACID MAN:
OR,
MEMOIRS
OF
Sir Charles Beville.

THE SECOND EDITION,
WITH ADDITIONS.

By CHARLES JENNER, M.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Facile omnes perferre ac pati. TERENT.

LONDON:
Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.
M DCC LXXIII.



CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.



BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

A *N* Apology for Novel-readers; which may
also serve for Novel-writers. Page 1

CHAP. II.

*Sir Charles Beville writes a Letter; and goes to
the Opera. Reflections on Fashion.* 7

A 2

CHAP.

iv CONTENTS.

CHAP. III.

*The Motions of the Clayton Family. A Discovery.
An Interview.* 19

CHAP. IV.

*Sir Charles makes another Discovery. Goes to the
Play. Critique on Ben Johnson's Alche-
mist.* 31



A Ride. A Conversation. Dinner. 46

CHAP. VI.

*Sir Charles visits Mrs. Stapleton, and walks a-
shopping with her.* 53

CHAP. VII.

*Sir Charles forms a Scheme. Remarks on it.
Entertains the Barkers at Dinner. Con-
versation Piece. Dissertation on Mu-
sic.* 59

CHAP. VIII.

*Sir Charles receives a Present, and writes a Let-
ter of Thanks.* 70

CHAP.

CONTENTS

CHAP. IX.

*Conversation-pieces upon Head-dresses, Propriety,
and various other Matters.* 78



BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

Castle-building ; an Elegy. 85

CHAP. II.

*The Party arrive at Stoney-Stratford. Meet a
Stranger there, and go to the Play.* 92

CHAP. III.

*Sir Charles arrives at the Hall, and finds his
Neighbours under a great Mistake. A Com-
parison. The Mistake propagated. The Mis-
take rectified.* 104

CHAP. IV.

*What passed at Sir Harry Clayton's after the Ar-
rival of Mrs. Stapleton.* 111

CHAP.

vi CONTENTS.

CHAP. V.

A Conversation Piece. 125

CHAP. VI.

A Walk. A fair Riddance. 133

CHAP. VII.

Various Remarks on Visiting, and other Matters. 140

CHAP. VIII.

Mr. Norris's Letter. The Reader is introduced into good Company. 147

CHAP. IX.

More Remarks on Conversation. A Hint or two concerning an Order of Men called Folly-Fellows. 151

CHAP. X.

The Party visit Lord Timon. Return and set out for London. 158

BOOK

CONTENTS.

vii

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

A small Hint to the Court of Criticism. The Design of these Memoirs; what they were intended to contain, and what not. 167

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles arrives in Town. Visits Mrs. Stapleton, who informs him of what had passed at Sir Harry Clayton's since her last Account. 173

CHAP. III.

Various Remarks. Sir Charles and Mr. Norris visit Mrs. Stapleton. 182

CHAP. IV.

Two Causes tried in the Court of Conscience with different Decisions. An Ounce of Candour better than a Pound of Wit. A Walk in the Morning the best Receipt to cure Cowardice. 191

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A great deal of Business done in a very little Time, and recorded in a very narrow Compass. 200

CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles has an Audience of Sir Harry, and half carries his Point with Miss Clayton. 209

CHAP. VII.

A short Chapter, containing the Opening of a very alarming Adventure. 218

CHAP. VIII.

Continuation of the Adventure. 224

CHAP. IX.

Conclusion of the Adventure. 233

CHAP. X.

The Conclusion of the Book, with the Reader's Assistance. 244

MEMOIRS

O F

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE.



CHAP. I.

*An Apology for Novel-readers; which may also
serve for Novel-writers.*

“ **I**N this trifling novel-reading age.—
“ At a time when the press groans under
“ the weight of so many ridiculous no-
“ vels—When a heap of trash in the form
“ of novels turned the brains of our young peo-
“ ple—” Such, my good reader, as I dare
say you can bear witness, are the reflections
which every four critic is daily, weekly and
monthly throwing out against this species of
Vol. II. B writing;

writing; and numerous as the authors in it are, I do not recollect that any of them have ever taken upon them to bestow even a chapter upon the defence of that branch of authorship, to which they owe all their reputation, if they have any to boast of, and, it may be, all their bread, if they have any to eat. Probably it may be in some measure accounted for, from the neglect which I took occasion two books ago to lament, of these introductory chapters; for though an apology of this kind might not be so easily worked into a chapter or letter in the body of the work, yet had this salutary custom been strictly adhered to, some one, or perhaps many of them, might have been glad to have made use of this means to fill up the number of pages allotted to the first chapter of a book; as I think the finding a proper subject for an introductory chapter, is, next to writing upon it, the most difficult task belonging to this mode of writing. Possibly too, an objection which may be made to these chapters in general, would hold good against an author's undertaking this apology in particular, namely, the taking up too much of his time. Little a love of fame can brook delay, a love of pudding less. But I, who, thanks to my stars, am not apt to be very hungry after either reputation or victuals, have chosen to spend a few minutes and a few pages

of paper in the defence of these little detached morsels of history, to which I acknowledge myself very partial. And here I shall not pretend to go upon the trite argument of their conveying instruction under the pleasing form of amusement, and being the natural vehicles of the *utile dulci*; for though I am as well convinced of the strength of this argument as any one can be who makes use of it, and have as high an opinion of this mode of conveying lessons of virtue and morality as any one can have, yet this is a more serious light than I think it necessary to view these productions in: I would rather look upon them in that of pleasing and innocent amusements. Life is full of cares and anxieties; man has occasion for, and a right to make use of, many expedients to make it pass on with tolerable ease. Various are the schemes to which he applies for that purpose; one hunts, one shoots, one plays, one reads, one writes. Scarce any one expects his mind to be made better by every one of them; happy if it is made no worse; and in this light what more pleasant, what more innocent than that amusement which is commonly called Castle-building? By which is meant, that indulging a pleasing reverie, which without any foundation in reality affords a momentary happiness from the reflection, without any danger of a proportionate anxiety

from a disappointment; the too usual attendant upon any scheme of a more substantial nature. For which species of amusement nothing affords so good materials as a novel. It is a castle ready built to your hands; and furnished with every accommodation necessary for the bestowing an hour of that happiness which the pliability of man's spirit fits him to enjoy. It is to works of grave and solid reasoning which it is said a man must apply for the knowledge of what may be of service to himself and others; but works of imagination alone can afford him that amusement, which (for any thing I know, the greatest piece of service that can be done him) transports him from the regions of, but too often melancholy, truth, to those of happier fiction. To what end does a man pursue any plan of study, but with a view to increasing his happiness by the prospect it opens to his sight? If this is effected by taking a view of the small pictures of human life which dramatic writings, whereof novels are only a more diffuse species, exhibit, why are they not as useful works as those which teach him to add to his happiness by other means? Happiness founded upon real and substantial circumstances in life, is what falls to the share of very few people: but that kind of ideal happiness, which arises from the contemplation of imaginary objects, is
in

in the power of every one, and is frequently no mean relief from the real evils of life. To reason any one out of this indulgence, would be to make him wise at the expence of one of his greatest comforts: with Horace's madman he would have great reason to cry out, *Pel me occidistis, amici.*—A late ingenious moralist has expressed himself better upon this subject than I can. “Sweet pliability,” says he, “of
 “man's spirit, which can at once surrender
 “itself to illusions, which cheat expectation
 “and sorrow of their weary moments! long,
 “long since had ye numbered out my days,
 “had I not trod so great a part of them up-
 “on this enchanted ground. When my way
 “is too rough for my feet, or too steep for
 “my strength, I get off it to some smooth
 “velvet path which fancy hath scattered over
 “with rose-buds of delights; and having taken
 “a few turns in it, come back strengthened
 “and refreshed. When evils press sore upon
 “me, and there is no retreat from them in this
 “world, then I take a new course, I leave it—
 “and, as I have a clearer idea of the Elysian
 “fields than I have of heaven, I force myself
 “like Æneas into them.—I see him meet the
 “pensive shade of his forsaken Dido, and
 “wish to recognize it; I see the injured spi-
 “rit wave her head, and turn off silent from
 “the author of her miseries and dishonours.

“ I lose the feelings for myself in hers. Surely
“ this is not walking in a vain shadow, nor
“ does man disquiet himself in vain by it; he
“ oftener does so in trusting the issue of his
“ commotions to reason only.”—This passage
when I first read it struck me so forcibly, that
I immediately sat down to write an elegy on
castle-building; chusing the first part of the
above quotation for my motto. And, as I
look upon it to be the best *morceau* my muse
ever produced, I shall, as a great favour,
reader, treat you with it at the beginning of
the next book.

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles Beville writes a Letter; and goes to the Opera. Reflections on Fashion.

WHEN Sir Charles arrived in town, the first thing he did was to sit down and write the following letter to Mr. Norris.

Grosvenor-Square.

—MARRIED next week! nor next year, as far as I can see. I am, my dear Norris, just at this minute as much vexed as ever I was in my life; and a great deal more than I think I ever ought to be. But patience was not made for men in love. And yet I may as well be patient too, for any good I can do by being otherwise. But she is gone, Norris, hurried away into Suffolk at a minute's warning, and whilst I was absent too; without even having an opportunity to kiss her hand to me, and say, God be with you. Gone indeed—carried away on purpose to be out of my reach; and as I understand, that wretch Sir Isaac in her company; and whether I shall ever see her again, the golden man who

sits yonder on his golden horse knows as much as I do. You must know Lord B. has given us more trouble than he intended; for I believe he never had any more thoughts of marrying Miss Clayton than you have. Whatever at least he might have at some time or other, it is become plain that he has not now; which Sir Harry is firmly persuaded is entirely owing to me, and is therefore so exasperated against me, that he is determined, whoever has her, I never shall. For which reason he took the opportunity of my being absent (which by the bye I had no occasion to have been) upon a foolish affair which I cannot now stay to explain to you, to convey her to the seat of her ancestors in Suffolk; and the officious Lady Clayton (what a horrid animal is your mother-in-law!) has taken care to invite that wretch Sir Isaac Rupee to pass his Christmas with them, as she calls it; which, in plain English, is to make his way with Miss Clayton if he can. Ay! that *if he can* is the only thing I have to comfort me. The only thing! I lie abominably; I have a letter from her, Norris, full, full of comfort. and I am in hopes, by Mrs. Stapleton's means, to convince Sir Harry that I had no hand in Lord B.'s revolt, if it was a revolt, and also to prove to him, that as long as I am so happy as to be in possession of his lovely daughter's heart,
he

he will not find it an easy matter to give any one else possession of her hand. I expect Mrs. Stapleton in town in a few days, and then—but I tell this tale vilely; I should first have told you who Mrs. Stapleton is: her first merit is, that she is Miss Clayton's bosom friend; but, had she not that to boast of, she would have more merits of her own than generally fall to the share of one woman. She is the widow of an officer; about one or two and thirty; handsome, and elegant in her person and address; chearful and lively in her deportment; and amiable to the greatest degree in her disposition. She has an easy independent fortune, and lives chiefly in town, but by way of variety has now passed some time at Bath. She will be in town in a few days, and has received an invitation to spend some weeks at Sir Harry Clayton's, which she flatters me, on my account as well as her own, she intends to accept of. And then, as Sir Harry's waiting will oblige him to come up immediately after the holidays, I am in hopes they may all come up together. In the mean time I believe I shall steal this opportunity to come down to the hall for a week or two; but this will entirely depend upon the advices I receive from Mrs. Stapleton. If I should come down, I hope you will not refuse me your company when I return to town; as

I foresee that I shall have occasion for your advice and assistance in more points than one. Adieu ! I am not quite steady enough to write much more at present. I feel that I am a little out of humour with something or other, and a good deal out of humour with myself for being so.

Your's sincerely,

C. BEVILLE.

P. S. I thank you for your ode; and in return send you a copy of a sonnet written by one of the minor poets upon leaving Bath and his Mistress: though there is no great matter in it, it has a something of a sort of a tenderness about it, that suits me very well just at present.

S O N N E T,

On leaving Bath.

I.

NO T thy beauty with grief my heart fills,
 O Bath, when I quit thy retreats,
 Tho' fair Grace wanders over thy hills,
 And gay Elegance reigns in thy streets ;
 Other hills, other vales may invite,
 Tho' less varied, as fresh and as green,
 Lib'ral Nature still offers delight,
 However she changes the scene.

II. Not

II.

Not thy splendor demands the soft sigh,
Tho' so often with wonder survey'd;
Since with little reluctance I fly,
Pleasure's sunshine for Comfort's mild shade.
Real happiness, placid tho' warm,
'Tis Retirement alone can impart;
And Reflection can give her a charm,
That brings her joys home to the heart.

III.

Not thy hours of incessant employ
Can my heart longer wish to pursue;
Ever eager in search of false joy,
Ever busy with nothing in view.
From ourselves tho' to crouds we may fly,
The best part of our aim we still miss;
Tho' we may not find time for a sigh,
Yet we never can relish a bliss.

IV.

Tho' bright Venus with thee keeps her court,
I could view ev'n her nymphs with disdain,
I could fly from her fairest resort,
Was not Phillis engag'd in her train:
But the sigh when she bid me adieu,
Or the blush when our glances have met,
Or the look when her hand she withdrew,
Ah how shall I learn to forget!

Sir Charles found that he could not perfectly acquire that serenity of mind which he usually enjoyed, without some assistance, and therefore he dressed and went to the opera. For whenever his mind was out of order, he as naturally had recourse to music, as he had to physic for any disorder of his body. He therefore secured himself, as he hoped, from all interruption, up in one corner of the pit, and by that time the first act of *Ezio* had been administered to him, he found himself much more composed; and before the opera was finished, he was in a perfect harmony of spirits. He had well-nigh however been disconcerted by a ridiculous circumstance, which at another time would only have diverted him: he was listening with the most delicious satisfaction to one of the finest songs in the opera, *Non so d'onde viene*, when an elderly person who sat close to him, and who seemed to be of the order of men who go to the opera because they have no where else to go to, just as they would go to a coffee-house, put his mouth close to his ear, and asked him what he thought of the king's speech.—If he had asked him for his money, he would not have surprized him more, nor have hurt him half so much. He turned round, and almost out of temper exclaimed. “ Good God, Sir! is
“ the opera a place to talk politics in?”
“ Why

"Why not," said the stranger, "as well
 "as the Church?" The ridiculousness of
 the answer was fortunate for them both:
 Sir Charles laughed, and recovered his at-
 tention; the stranger found he was not a man
 for his purpose, so turned to his next neigh-
 bour on the other side. When the opera was
 finished, Sir Charles turned to the stranger and
 said, "Sir, I ask your pardon for answering
 "you so abruptly; but I have an enthusiasm
 "about music which will not let me bear in-
 "terruption." "I was deceived then, Sir,"
 replied the stranger, "for as I did not hear
 "you say one word about the performance, I
 "concluded you did not regard it." "The
 "reason of that," replied Sir Charles, "is,
 "that I enjoyed it, which kept me silent."
 "Why then, Sir," said the stranger, "I
 "may gather from thence that the people who
 "pester one so much with *bravo! ancora! be-*
 "*nissimo! squisito!* and all that, do not enjoy
 "it; and upon my life I always thought so."
 "Different people," said Sir Charles, "have
 "different ways of expressing their satisfac-
 "tion." "It may be so," replied the stranger,
 "but I believe all thro' life, as well as at the
 "opera, they that talk most, feel least. Sir, I
 "thank you, and I wish you a good night;
 "the next time I talk to a man at the opera
 "upon politics, it shall be one who is mak-
 "ing

"ing the greatest noise about the music, and
 "I dare say I shall think of this conversation."
 "Pray, Sir," said Sir Charles, who was
 loth to part with him, "may I ask what
 "particular satisfaction you yourself have in
 "coming to the opera?" "Why, troth, Sir,"
 replied the stranger, "if I was not very ho-
 "nest, you would puzzle me; but as I am,
 "I shall acknowledge that I have no farther
 "satisfaction in it than what arises from see-
 "ing a number of well-dressed people toge-
 "ther, and now-and-then a little amusement
 "from the scenes and dances; for as to mu-
 "sic, I dare say you will easily believe I
 "know no more of it than my sword-hilt,
 "and care as little about it. Now all this
 "I tell you, because, as I said before, I am
 "very honest; but I dare say, if you was
 "to put the same question to nine people
 "out of ten all through the house, they would
 "tell you forty lies rather than acknowledge
 "as much as I have done; though they might
 "do it with equal truth; nay, half of them
 "cannot have so much satisfaction as I have
 "in it, because from living constantly in pub-
 "lic, which I do not, they see the same faces
 "and the same things every day; so that they
 "have no excuse but the fashion." "It seems
 "unaccountable to me," said Sir Charles,
 "that people who may chuse their own amuse-
 "ments,

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE. 15

ments, should suffer others to chuse for them." "Why then, Sir," said the stranger, "you will pardon me, I hope, but I fancy you are not much conversant in public life ; if you was, you would know that, in this great town, there are not above forty or fifty people who pretend to judge at all ; and they judge for themselves and all the rest of the town into the bargain. One or two of these leading people say, We will go to the opera ; and all the world goes to the opera. Another party of them say, We will go and drink punch at Sadler's Wells ; and all the world drinkspunch at Sadler's Wells. And if another leading sett should say, We will go and see the people make bricks in Marybone-Fields ; all the world would go and see them make bricks in Marybone-Fields." By this time the house was almost empty, and Sir Charles found himself under a necessity of quitting his new companion, which, as he began to relish his conversation, he did with great regret. Whether the gentleman perceived it, or whether he felt some prepossession in favour of Sir Charles, I cannot say ; but upon taking his leave, he said, "Sir, if you ever drop in at Munday's coffee-house in Maiden-Lane, I shall be glad to drink a dish of coffee with you." Sir Charles said he should be happy to meet him, and so they parted. When Sir Charles

Charles got home, he could not help pursuing in his mind the hint which his new acquaintance had given him, and falling into a train of reflections upon the prevalence of fashion, and the great power which it has over the minds even of sensible people. It is strange, thought he, not that I should do a thing, because others do; but that I should approve a thing, because others approve it. It is not strange that I should wear a long coat last year, and a short one this; but surely it is rather so, that I should think a long coat handsome and graceful last year, and this year think the direct contrary: and yet it is true.—One would imagine, if there are any fixed principles of beauty, the same mode must be always graceful and becoming; but yet that cannot be the case, because no fashion was ever invented, however becoming whilst it was in use, which would bear to be seen after it was laid aside by the generality of the world. Perhaps all this may be resolved into custom; the eye is hurt by what it is not accustomed to see. Perhaps prejudice in favour of people may give us the same favourable idea of their customs; and from knowing a man to be a man of fashion and taste, I conclude that every thing he wears, and every amusement he is fond of, must be in taste, and fashionable; and this brings the matter just to what my unknown friend said; I not only wear

a short coat and go to the opera, but I love to wear a short coat and go to the opera, because such and such people, of whom I have a good opinion, set me the example. And thus one man thinks for all the rest.

But suppose I have a mind to exert my reason, and think and act for myself; suppose I wear such a coat as my eye tells me is becoming, and I find convenient; and suppose I go to such amusements, as I feel satisfaction from, without considering whether I meet my lord there, or his groom; what will be the consequence of all this? Shall I be looked upon as a man of more sense and reason than the rest of the world, who cannot bear the meanness of being dictated to, but exert a manly resolution in thinking for myself? Not a bit: the world will look upon me as an obstinate puppy, and their very objection to me will be my being less prejudiced, and less led by the nose than themselves. Every man therefore must submit to be guided by others, and even in this country of liberty, must not persist in having more reason than the rest of the world chuses to allow him.

In short, if a man will live in the world, he must live like the world; and as long as he takes care to stop short at matters of indifference, there is no great harm done; only by this means, it becomes a little difficult for a man to determine what he really likes, and what he does not:

not: because, whatever he may think he is fond of in his closet, he is not sure, when he comes into the world, whether he may love it or not.

Now whether a man is obliged in compliment to the world to give up what he does like, as well as comply with what he does not, is a point upon which I shall take the first opportunity of consulting my friend at Munday's coffee-house.

Having therefore determined to go there some time in the following day for that purpose, he rang for his slippers, and retired to rest.



C H A P. III.

*The Motions of the Clayton Family. A Discovery.
An Interview.*

WE shall leave Sir Charles to enjoy his repose, whilst we take a short view of what passed among the Claytons.

When Sir Harry communicated to his daughter his design of quitting Bath, the morning but one after the unfortunate ball, her astonishment was not easily to be described. It was a manœuvre of which she had not the least suspicion, and which was so contrary to her hopes, as well as her inclinations, that she hardly knew how to receive the intelligence of it with proper respect to her informer. For she had flattered herself that when Sir Harry found, by Lord B.'s behaviour, that he had not the least thought of any nearer connection with her, he would be anxious for an opportunity of securing Sir Charles Beville, as the next eligible match which offered. When therefore she found that he was more than ever exasperated against him, she plainly saw Lady Clayton's hand in the business

business, and concluded that she must have gained Sir Harry over to her interest; and that by this means she should be reduced to the cruel necessity of either acting contrary to her father's inclinations, perhaps his commands, or of being sacrificed to the avaricious views of her mother-in-law. In this miserable dilemma she flew to her friend Mrs. Stapleton, and told her her situation. Mrs. Stapleton comforted her with the hopes that the great affection which Sir Harry had for her, joined to his infinite contempt for Sir Isaac Rupee, would, when his passion began to abate, get the better of Lady Clayton's influence, and dispose him to a more favourable reception of Sir Charles than he seemed at present inclined to. She promised her that she would join them in Suffolk in a very little time, and do every thing in her power to bring Sir Harry to a better temper of mind; and as Miss Clayton knew that Mrs. Stapleton herself had no small influence over Sir Harry, for he had a high opinion of her understanding, she had no small hope from her mediation. Sir Charles's absence therefore was now the principal thing that gave her uneasiness. She wished to see him before she went, though only to give him an opportunity of repeating once more, what she had heard so often, and to acknowledge an attachment to him, of which

which she knew, he had no reason to have the least doubt. Yet still she wished to see him. The tender *addios* of two people, sincerely attached to each other, are too delicious moments to be lost without regret. It was not therefore to be wondered at that Miss Clayton determined to endeavour by every means in her power to persuade her father to put off his journey for one day only, for which, as she told Mrs. Stapleton, she had some reasonable plea, as she really had some little businesses to settle with milliners, mantua-makers, and such sort of gentry, with whom young ladies have generally some operation or other going forward, which cannot always be concluded at a minute's warning.

Mrs. Stapleton having promised to see her in the evening, Miss Clayton proceeded to make her attempt upon Sir Harry: but, alas! he was rock, he was adamant; and in the afternoon Mrs. Stapleton received the following billet, inclosing a letter for Sir Charles.

TOUT est perdu. Nous partons demain au point du jour. Venez ce soir. Helas vous le reverrez!—Dieu sçait si jamais—donnez lui ce lettre, ce foible temoinage—O mon amie, pardonnez un attendrissement que je ne saurois cacher; et pourquoi le cacher de vous? Adieu.

H. CLAYTON.

Mrs.

Mrs. Stapleton came in the evening and staid supper: she found Sir Harry so much out of sorts, that she did not venture to say a word of Sir Charles; but wisely reserved her battery till she might have an opportunity of playing it off to advantage in Suffolk, where she promised to join the party in about a fortnight.

The two friends parted, not without some tears, and by six o'clock, in a dark, cold, November morning, poor Miss Clayton, with her handkerchief in her hand, followed Sir Harry and Lady Clayton into the coach; and in a few minutes turning her back on Bath, envied every butter-woman she met coming to market.

The journey it may be supposed was not very pleasant on any side. The roads were indifferent, the weather gloomy, and the conversation worse. It consisted chiefly of dark hints from Sir Harry, and smart sarcasms from his lady; one of which Miss Clayton frequently could not understand, the other she as frequently would not: and as Mrs. Handy occupied the fourth place in the coach, they could not conveniently come to an explanation. To say the truth, poor Miss Clayton was in a very pitiable situation. She had encouraged an inclination for a man who was in every respect worthy of her, and whose character

racter was such as did honour to her choice; and yet, from the avaricious disposition of her mother-in-law, and the strange chimerical views of her father, she had, in their eyes, all the guilt of having engaged in an unwarrantable connection with an unworthy person. Secure in the innocence, and even laudableness of her own intentions, she did not even wish to make a secret of a passion, which, when rightly placed, and prudently directed, does honour to a good heart, and frequently mends a bad one; and yet, so capricious was her lot, that the very sentiments, which the rest of the world, if they were consulted, must have approved and commended her for, the only two people in the world whom she was bound to consult imputed to her as a crime. In this situation she had nothing to hope for, but that time and the interposition of her friend might prevail on Sir Harry, who was really very fond of her, to open his eyes, and give up the thoughts of making his daughter miserable by refusing, what he himself would at another time have thought as good a match as could have offered, merely because he had been disappointed in his hopes of one which really never did offer: but till this change in his sentiments could be brought about, poor Miss Clayton was doomed to suffer all the ill-bred petulance of Lady Clayton, without having

her

her usual advantage of her father's countenance to support her against it.

In this kind of snip-snap disposition the family arrived in town, and Sir Harry proposed setting out for Suffolk the day but one following, which indeed was the very day on which Sir Charles arrived in town. By great good fortune, however, some business fell out so luckily as to detain Sir Harry two days longer than he intended, and Sir Isaac arriving the day after him, prevailed on him to stay another day, that they might all go down together; so that Sir Charles and Miss Clayton were for three days within a few hundred yards of each other, Sir Harry's house being in Upper Brook-Street; and had it not been for an accidental discovery, neither of them would have known a word of the matter; which convinces me that there is not that sympathetic vibration about the heart-strings of lovers, which some of the romance writers, of old times, would fain persuade us there is. I make no doubt but the historian of Sir Amadis de Gaul, or Sir Belianis of Greece, would have informed you that their hero, during those three days, felt a constant tremor or palpitation of the heart, which he could not otherwise account for, than by supposing that his mistress must be deposited somewhere within reach of the sympathetic power, and that accordingly
searching

searching day and night he at last discovered a trap-door, guarded by a black giant, or a fiery dragon, or an ugly old woman, or some such phenomenon, whom having knocked on the head, the door opened of itself, he descended, and brought off his mistress in triumph. But, reader, I am an historian of more credit, and therefore shall freely acknowledge, that Sir Charles slept as quietly in that bed to which, at the end of the last chapter, we left him retiring, as if Miss Clayton had been, as he really thought she was, safe and sound at *Beechwood-Park* in Suffolk. And thither probably she might still have been conveyed without his knowing any thing of her motions, had not fortune favoured him beyond his expectations. Having been fatigued with his journey, he slept longer than usual the next morning, and in order to rouse himself, as soon as he had breakfasted, he set out to take a walk through Hyde-Park, and down Constitution-Hill, intending at the end of it to call in at Munday's coffee-house. When, lo ! as he was walking up Upper Brook-Street, he was rather alarmed at hearing a faint scream from a dining-room window ; when looking up, imagine his transport, reader, he perceived that it came from the mouth of Miss Clayton herself. In his first hurry he was going to rap immediately at the door ; but upon her waving her hand

to him, he desisted, and waited a minute to see the event. The signals of lovers always mean something: Mrs. Handy presently appeared at the door, and ushered him into the parlour, with as visible a joy in her countenance as if it had been an humble servant of her own. In a few minutes the door opened, Miss Clayton herself entered, and "Is it possible!" was uttered by both at the same instant. "How infinitely happier am I," said Sir Charles, "at this moment, than I almost expected ever to be again! O Miss Clayton, if you knew what I have suffered since I saw you, I am sure you would pity me; I am sure you did pity me; your kind letter, for which I return you ten thousand, thousand thanks, tells me you did." "Indeed, Sir Charles," replied Miss Clayton, looking down, "had I thought we should have so soon met again, I believe I should not have written that letter; but the suddenness of my father's motions made me dread a long separation from you, and as your absence was in consequence of my advice, I could not leave you intirely without some acknowledgement of my obligations to you."

"For once then, Madam," replied Sir Charles, "I am more obliged to Sir Harry than

“ than he intended I should be; but I am not
 “ absolutely without hopes of being still more
 “ obliged to him for an intentional favour.
 “ Surely, my dearest Miss Clayton, he cannot
 “ be so far guided by Lady Clayton, as to re-
 “ fuse my offers in preference to a man whom
 “ I know in his heart he despises and abhors;
 “ especially as I may without presumption
 “ hope for your declaration in my favour.
 “ Can a father refuse such a daughter the wish
 “ of her heart; and that wish too in favour of
 “ a man, who, however unworthy he may be
 “ of her acceptance, will be bold to say, he is
 “ not absolutely unworthy of her father’s,”
 “ It would be folly in me,” said Miss Clayton,
 “ after what I have given under my hand, to
 “ make any scruple of acknowledging my
 “ partiality to you; I therefore freely ac-
 “ knowledge that I shall leave nothing untried
 “ to secure you a favourable reception from
 “ my father: but, alas! Sir Charles, you
 “ do not know the impetuosity of Lady Clay-
 “ ton, nor how great an influence, by mere
 “ dint of teasing, she can gain over him: be-
 “ sides, he is at present firmly convinced that
 “ you are the occasion of Lord B.’s withdraw-
 “ ing his pretensions, which has exasperated
 “ him so much against you, that I verily
 “ believe, was he to find you here now, he
 “ would

“ would forbid you the house ; which indeed
“ is the reason of my using the caution I do,
“ lest any of the family, except my own maid,
“ should see you.”

“ I was a little aware,” replied Sir Charles,
“ of what you tell me, but I was in hopes
“ his finding his mistake with regard to that
“ shuttle-cock Lord B. might nevertheless
“ have removed the principal obstacle to my
“ pretensions ; and as I was in hopes he would
“ be too wise to refuse one offer, because he
“ had lost another, I had determined to write
“ to him by to-night’s post, to make him an
“ offer of *carte blanche*, and beg his permission
“ to pay my respects to him and you at *Beech-*
“ *wood-Park*.” “ This,” replied Miss Clayton,
“ would have been a most unfavourable juncture
“ to have put your generous resolution in
“ practice, and for both our sakes let me in-
“ treat you to defer taking any step till Mrs.
“ Stapleton has had time to pave the way for
“ your reception ; for was my father in the
“ heat of his passion to give you a refusal, I
“ know his pride would never suffer him to
“ retract it afterwards, however he might
“ wish to do it.” “ But,” said Sir Charles, “ I
“ hear that Sir Isaac Rupee is to be of your
“ party this Christmas ; can I, my charming
“ Miss Clayton, bear the thoughts of his be-
“ ing

ing admitted to the happiness of attending you, and pestering you with the appearance of a passion which he cannot feel, whilst I am—O my lovely Harriet, that, that is too-much!" "Surely," replied she, smiling, "Sir Charles can have nothing to fear from Sir Isaac Rupee of all men living."—"Pardon me, my dearest Madam," replied Sir Charles, "I have no fears; but whilst I am banished from you, I think I should be angry with a fly that settled on your hand. You know not, my Harriet, how capricious an animal is a man who loves as I do." "You have an ill opinion," replied Miss Clayton, "of my sincerity, if you cannot imagine that I can form a pretty just idea of it. What are, Sir Charles, the capricious delicacies of a man in love, to those which a woman feels in the like circumstances?" Sir Charles's heart thanked her at his eyes; he pressed her hand to his lips, and the conversation grew more and more tender, till lady Clayton's bell informed them that some company, who were with her, were going; and Sir Charles thought it necessary to take leave also; which he did with no small regret, after having agreed to meet Miss Clayton and her mother-in-law, as it were by accident, at the play in the evening. For, as neither Sir Charles's pride nor his honesty

neſty would ſuffer him to carry on a clandestine correſpondence, he ſaw no reaſon why he ſhould make any ſecret of his being in town, or why he ſhould reſuſe himſelf the ſatisfaction of paſſing a few hours with his miſtreſs in public, ſince he could not with prudence do it at her own houſe.



CHAP. IV.

Sir Charles makes another discovery. Goes to the Play... Critique on Ben Johnson's Alchemist.

SIR Charles having taken leave of Miss Clayton, pursued his walk; but as his mind was occupied by more pleasing ideas than it had been when he left his house in the morning, he had no occasion to go to Munday's for amusement; so took a turn or two in the Mall, which, as it happened to be a bright, frosty day, was very full. He had not walked long before he observed his opera acquaintance seated upon a bench, in close conference with a Chelsea pensioner. Sir Charles touched his hat as he passed him: which the old gentleman perceiving, he quitted his seat and joined him, "You find me, Sir," said he, as he came up to Sir Charles, "in odd company; " but I look upon all mankind as one great " book; and sometimes meet with much instruction in a page which does not happen to " be so fair as some others may be. I assure you

“ that dirty blotted leaf, which you found me
“ studying, helped me to an excellent ac-
“ count of the war at the latter end of Queen
“ Anne’s reign, and gave me some anecdotes
“ which would have made a figure in the his-
“ tory of those times.” Sir Charles smiled
at his notion, and told him he hoped he had
not broken in upon his studies. “ No, Sir,
“ no,” replied the stranger, “ I had pretty
“ well read him through ; and I wish I may
“ not pay for my curiosity by a fit of the
“ gout, from sitting so long this cold day, as
“ it is ; but there is one of the things
“ now in which a man thinks he is obliged
“ to sacrifice his sense to the opinion of the
“ world : my curiosity would make me sit
“ down upon a bench in a bitter cold day to
“ take an opportunity of talking accidentally,
“ as it were, with that poor fellow, because
“ my pride would not suffer me to take a turn
“ with him in the Mall.” “ This,” said Sir
Charles “ is, I believe, a case in point with
“ regard to an affair which I cannot set-
“ tle in my own mind, and upon which
“ I determined to take the first opportunity
“ of asking your opinion. I have at length
“ convinced myself, that it is absolutely ne-
“ cessary for a man who lives in the world to
“ comply with many things which he either
“ dis-

“ dislikes or does not care six-pence about;
 “ but is it also absolutely necessary that he
 “ should, in compliment to the opinion
 “ of others, give up what he is himself
 “ really fond of, and finds satisfaction
 “ in ?”

“ Why,” replied the old gentleman,
 “ with regard to absolutely necessary, the case
 “ stands thus. Every thing is in itself inde-
 “ pendent of the opinion of the world, good,
 “ bad, or indifferent ; if it is good, I am
 “ bound to do it ; if bad, I am bound not to
 “ do it ; if indifferent, I may to be sure ei-
 “ ther do it or let it alone : but then if it is
 “ contrary to the custom and opinion of the
 “ world, I must pay the penalty, which is
 “ submitting to be called a very particular man.
 “ If I am so happy as to be able to think
 “ that a trifle, I then stand a chance for be-
 “ ing a wiser man, a better man, and a
 “ happier man, than any of my neighbours.”
 Sir Charles smiled, and looked as if he wanted
 to say something if he dared. “ I know your
 “ thoughts,” said the stranger, “ you long to
 “ ask me if I am not a particular man. I
 “ hope I am ; and if I had but resolution
 “ enough to get the better of some few preju-
 “ dices, I should bid fair for being a very par-
 “ ticular man ; and by the good temper with
 C 5 “ which

“ which you seem to indulge me in my humour, I flatter myself it is a character at which you are not so greatly shocked as most men of your age and figure would be.” “ According to your own notions of the character,” said Sir Charles, “ you pay me a compliment, and in return I cannot but acknowledge, that, whimsical as the beginning of our acquaintance has been, I have a great inclination to continue it.” “ You must know, Sir,” said the stranger, “ that I have been as much a dupe to the opinions of the world, and have taken notions upon trust, as much as any man who ever lived in it: but I have for some time begun to suspect that common notions were not always founded in common sense, and I have lately been set right in so material an article, that I am now upon the plan of canvassing every custom before I give into it; and I don’t doubt but in a little time I shall acknowledge no laws for my actions, but those of God and my country. I have a son, Sir; and he, as I thought, played the fool and married, without my consent, a girl without a shilling. According to the common routine of life, therefore, I concluded that he was ruined, that he had taken a step which it never was a
“ custom

“ custom for rich fathers to forgive, and ac-
 “ cordingly, brute that I was, I turned him
 “ and his wife out of doors. But by the
 “ time that they had suffered more hardships
 “ than I can bear to recollect, and I more
 “ pain than I cared to acknowledge, I began
 “ to doubt whether I had not been a little
 “ too hasty. By great good fortune, just
 “ about this time my poor boy met with a
 “ singular adventure which brought him to
 “ the knowledge of an old fellow-collegian,
 “ who in a good hour undertook to plead his
 “ cause with me. This gentleman, with
 “ whom I am only acquainted by letter, is I
 “ find a very particular man; and in a little
 “ time, as soon, that is to say, as my pride and
 “ obstinacy could be let gently down, he con-
 “ vinced me that the opinion of the world in
 “ these cases is not worth a rush; that my son
 “ was happier in a wife of his own chusing
 “ than he probably would have had any chance
 “ of being with one of mine; that I was be-
 “ sides punishing myself for his indiscretion;
 “ and, in short, he argued in so very particular
 “ a manner, that I sent for my boy home, and
 “ shall have reason to love a particular man as
 “ long as I live.”

“ You said, Sir, I think,” said Sir Charles,
 “ that your son met with his friend in con-

"sequence of a singular adventure; may I
 "take the liberty to ask if that transaction
 "was not at Bath?" "Indeed it was," cried
 the old gentleman, stopping short, and looking
 earnestly in Sir Charles's face. "And your
 "name, Sir," said Sir Charles, "is Barker?"
 The old gentleman looked astonished; but at
 length recollecting himself, "It must be so,"
 cried he; "you can be no other than Sir
 "Charles Beville." Sir Charles bowed.
 "You are?" continued he; "why then, Sir,
 "you are the happiest man living; for I
 "know the amiable goodness of your heart
 "so well, that I am sure the sight you will
 "see at my house will be the most delicious
 "treat that can be given you. A whole fa-
 "mily enjoying the most perfect happiness in
 "each other, to which your humanity open-
 "ed the way. Your excellent father, Sir,
 "laid the foundation for my reformation;
 "and your most excellent friend, Mr. Norris,
 "completed it. You must, Sir, go home
 "and dine with me; I cannot be easy till I
 "have done penance for my brutality, by
 "being present at an interview between you
 "and my children." Sir Charles was af-
 fected; he could hardly resist the old gen-
 tleman's importunity; but looking at his
 watch, and finding it late, he recollected that
 his

his engagement at the play would make it impossible for him to dine abroad and return home to dress afterwards, so making Mr. Barker a promise that he would not fail to wait on him the next day, he inquired his address, and took his leave.

It was not late when Sir Charles came to the play-house, as you will easily imagine; and, consulting the box-keeper's books, he found Lady Clayton's name in the stage-box; in one corner of which therefore he planted himself, waiting for their arrival, which very soon happened. It is not easy to describe the surprize and ill-humour which arose at once in Lady Clayton's face, when, thrusting her hoop in edgeways, she caught a view of Sir Charles, who made her a profound bow as she entered, and offered his hand to assist her in getting to the front of the box. He was not sorry that she declined his civility, as he had, by that means, an opportunity of offering it where it was better received; Miss Clayton, who followed her ladyship, made no scruple of accepting his hand, and having seated her, he planted himself close behind them, without taking the least notice of Sir Isaac Rupee, who stood puffing at the back of the box, not a little disconcerted to see his duty performed, and his place occupied, by his old antagonist.

Sir

Sir Charles leaning forward, inquired of Lady Clayton with much civility after Sir Harry; asked how long her ladyship had been in town; hoped she caught no cold on her journey, as the weather had been so bad; and, in short, said every silly, civil thing he could think of, by way of trying to put her in good-humour: but he got nothing more than a half bow, "Yes, Sir;"—"No, Sir;"—"Much obliged t'ye, Sir;"—and so forth; so finding there was not much to be done there, he did by his civility as he had done by his hand, and offered it where he knew it would be better received.

Whilst he was entertaining Miss Clayton with an account of the particular manner in which he had become acquainted with old Mr. Barker, Sir Isaac found something or other to say to Lady Clayton, so giving a nod with his head at Sir Charles, as much as to say, "It will be my turn when we get into Suffolk," he very contentedly seated himself behind her, and they settled who was who, till the curtain drew up.

The play was *The Alchemist*. "It is a stupid play," said Lady Clayton as the curtain drew up; "it is so old-fashioned," and "damned low," said Sir Isaac. In the third scene, however, they both laughed immoderately

rately at *Abel Dragger*. "Excellent!" said Sir Isaac. "Inimitable!" said Lady Clayton. "There's some humour in this character," said Sir Isaac. "Pray, Sir," said Sir Charles, "don't you think the humour lies a good deal in seeing Mr. Garrick in that old waistcoat and wig, and that green apron?"

"Why, Sir," said Sir Isaac, "if it had not been a top character, Mr. Garrick would not have chosen it." "Now I think," said Miss Clayton, "that he rather chose it, on purpose to shew that he could delight one with any thing; and if he had taken *Dapper* or *Ananias*, we should have been as well pleased with them."

Sir Charles smiled. Sir Isaac did not dare to contradict her; Lady Clayton did not think it worth while; and so the argument dropped.

In the second act Sir Charles laughed heartily at some strokes in the character of *Sir Epicure Mammon*: possibly Sir Isaac thought he was drawing some parallel. "You seem, Sir," said he, "to be much taken with this part; I cannot see where the great humour lies in cheating a gentleman in so barefaced a manner." "My dear Sir," replied

replied Sir Charles, " in these cases we must
" feel, not reason; humour is a thing of so de-
" licate a nature, that if it is not felt, it is im-
" possible to point it out." Sir Isaac was an-
swered; an argument above the comprehen-
sion of your antagonist, is just as good as a
convincing one.

" You see, Sir," said Sir Charles, when
they came to the scene where *Mammon* takes
so much pains to convince *Surly*, " that all
" the humour does not lie in their cheating
" him, but in the great pains which he takes
" to cheat himself: and if we look atten-
" tively into human nature, we shall find
" that humour is not yet out of date." Sir
Isaac took a pinch of snuff.

" Pray, Sir Charles," said Miss Clayton,
after the act was over, " don't you think the
" poet has crowded into his play, with some
" degree of affectation, rather more of the
" science which he meant to ridicule than
" was necessary?" " Excellently well said,
" upon my soul," cried Sir Isaac, and laugh-
ed very loud; " what say you to that, Sir
" Charles?" " Why, Madam," replied
Sir Charles, " in this respect Lady
" Clayton's observation upon this play, is
" very just, it is old-fashioned; that is to
" say, the science upon which the ridicule is
" turned, and which, at that time of day,
" had

" had turned the heads of half the studious
 " men in the nation, is now entirely exploded;
 " and so the pains which the poet takes to
 " expose the principles of the science lose
 " great part of their effect to us, because
 " they appear needless. But perhaps, as you
 " very accurately observe, there may be a
 " degree of affectation in it; Ben Johnson
 " was a good scholar, and a man of great read-
 " ing, it was not therefore to be wondered at,
 " in an age when such people were scarce,
 " that he was willing to seize every opportu-
 " nity of shewing his knowledge, sometimes
 " even at the expence of his judgment. It must
 " be entirely owing to this, that in the second
 " scene of this act he has made *Sir Epicure*
 " *Mammon*, in expressing his intended luxury,
 " have recourse to all the things in use
 " amongst the luxurious part of the Ro-
 " mans; as I dare say a Lord-mayor's feast,
 " even in his time, would have furnished him
 " with dishes which would have conveyed
 " much higher ideas of luxury and epicurism
 " to his audience, than the paps of a fat
 " pregnant sow dressed with a poignant sauce,
 " or the tongues of dormice and camels heels;
 " but then he would have lost the opportunity
 " of letting you know what was Apicius's
 " diet against the epilepsy." " Who was
 " Api-

“ Apicius !” said Sir Isaac. “ Vy,” said Lady Clayton, who was roused by the mention of a Lord-mayor’s feast, “ he is one of the people in that book that Sir Harry is so fond of, because it was written by a lord, *Dialogues of the Dead*; he, and another man with a hard name, talk all about eating.” “ Very true, Madam,” said Sir Charles. Miss Clayton blushed, and inquiring who a lady was in the opposite stage-box, put an end to the criticism. “ What are these; taylors !” said Lady Clayton, when the third act opened with *Tribulation and Ananias*. “ Quakers,” said Sir Isaac.—When they came to the next scene, where *Subtle* is enumerating the arts and absurdities of the Puritans, “ You see,” said Sir Charles, “ that Mr. Foote was not the first person who made use of the stage to ridicule the vice or absurdity of a religious sect; for his *Minor* cannot expose the hypocrisy and enthusiasm of the Methodists more, than this play and the *Bartholomew Fair* of the same author do those of the Puritans.” “ I think it is a shame though,” said Sir Isaac; “ such things ought to be talked of no where but at church.” “ Pray, Sir,” said Sir Charles, “ do not you think that the stage as well as the pulpit may be made to support the
 “ cause

“ cause of virtue? If so, why is not one
 “ vice the object of its censure as well as
 “ another? For my own part, I acknowledge
 “ I cannot see why hypocrisy and enthusiasm
 “ are to be spared a bit more than drunken-
 “ nefs or lying.” Sir Isaac took a pinch of
 snuff. The fourth act passed without much
 notice till they came to the last scene; which
 Sir Charles observed was the most exquisite
 piece of satire that ever was written. “ Why
 “ it is nothing,” said lady Clayton, “ but a
 “ parcel of people quarrelling.” “ Very
 “ true, Madam,” replied he, “ and you see
 “ they are all turned upon one poor man;
 “ and therein lies the depth of the satire. All
 “ the people, who are cheated by *Subtle*
 “ and *Face*, are joined together against *Sarly*,
 “ who would open their eyes; the common
 “ fate of those who will give advice, and be
 “ wiser than their neighbours. You see Ma-
 “ dam, though he only tells them how egre-
 “ giously they are imposed upon, and begs
 “ leave only to be their best friend, and set
 “ them right, the villains have the address
 “ to give every man a separate cause to
 “ quarrel with him, till they drive him out of
 “ doors.”

“ There is nothing easier,” said Miss
 Clayton, “ than for artful people to impose
 “ upon

“upon simple ones, except it is to persuade them to impose upon themselves.”

The *denouement* in the fifth act afforded them some diversion, though Miss Clayton observed, and Sir Charles could not but acknowledge, that the poet had been deficient in point of poetical justice in the conclusion, for *Face*, the chief contriver of all the villainy, is pardoned, and taken into favour by his master, who, by the bye, is taken in to make one in the plot, as a reward for his helping him, by means of a trick, to a foolish wife, whilst all the injured parties are left without redress. But Ben Johnson was not so excellent in the management of his plots, as of his incidents and dialogue.—Miss Clayton thanked Sir Charles for having made her enter more into the spirit of the play than ever she had done before. Lady Clayton said, that it was called a very fine play; but it was too old for her: and Sir Isaac persisted in his opinion, that it was damned low.—Sir Charles asked Lady Clayton, how long Sir Harry staid in town; and said he would do himself the honour of waiting on him; to which she replied with rather more glee than delicacy, “Aye, but we go to-morrow morning.” Sir Charles bowed, sighed, said he was very sorry,
in.

in which he certainly spoke truth, and having handed Miss Clayton to her coach, took a melancholy leave, went home in low spirits, supped alone, and retired to rest with that kind of sensation which has a mixture of pleasure and pain.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A Ride. A Conversation. A Dinner.

THE next day Sir Charles was not forgetful of his engagement; but as it was a fine morning, he first got on horseback, and, mechanically as it were, turned his horse's head towards the New-road: not with any hope of meeting with or overtaking Sir Harry Clayton's coach, but merely because the ideas of Miss Clayton, and the road she had travelled that morning, came into his mind together, and gave that road a superiority over all other roads.—How does the minutest trifle acquire value by a connection with a beloved object! The man who would throw away a pin which fell from his mistress's sleeve-knot the instant before he parted from her, feels not the true idea of love.—When Sir Charles returned from his ride, he dressed and went to Mr. Barker's. He was not without some little embarrassment in his mind as he went; he wished the interview with young Barker was over, but more with his wife. His spirits were in proper tone for being tenderly

derly affected, and he feared the grateful acknowledgments of an amiable woman might awake his sensibility too much for his comfort. He had never seen Mrs. Barker: "I wish," said he, as his chariot stopped at the door, "that I was obliged to her, instead of she to me."—There is a certain *politesse du cœur* which makes it awkward beyond expression to see an amiable woman in humiliating circumstances: Sir Charles would have looked a lion in the face with less pain than a woman who thought herself obliged to him. "I cannot help it," said he to himself as he entered the drawing-room door. "I hope she has neither beauty nor sensibility." But, alas! she had both in a superior degree. She was sitting in the most engaging of all attitudes playing with her child; whilst her husband, with one arm round her waist, was looking up in her face, and enjoying the smile of endearment, which increased the beauty of it, by shewing in it the sweetness of her mind. At any other time how would Sir Charles have enjoyed the picture!—They both rose up at his entrance; Mr. Barker sprang forward to meet him with open arms; but checked himself with the air of a man fearful of presuming. Sir Charles met him half way with a hand held out, which he eagerly seized. "My dear

" dear Mr. Barker," said Sir Charles, " how
 " happy am I in this unexpected meeting!"
 " I know, I know you are," cried Mr.
 Barker. " O, Sir, see, see the works of
 " your hands; see the woman, the child
 " which you have rescued from——" " My
 " dear friend," interrupted Sir Charles, " let
 " us only look forward. Permit me to have
 " the honour of being known to your lady."
 He advanced to salute her; she offered her
 cheek with a guarded frankness, as if she with
 difficulty restrained herself from falling on his
 neck. A tear stole down her cheek as he
 pressed it with his lips; she made an effort to
 speak—" O, Sir!"—looking towards her
 child, was all she could utter. Sir Charles's
 eyes glistened: he took her trembling hand
 in his; she was not sorry, as she had need of
 his assistance to support her to the sofa—
 After a moment's pause, " Forgive me, Sir
 " Charles," said she, " if I cannot find
 " words to express my gratitude: I cannot,
 " Sir, lay open my heart to you, but I can
 " to heaven; and if prayers can draw down
 " upon you a return for obligations too
 " great——" " My dear Madam," interrupted
 Sir Charles, " do not oppress me with ac-
 " knowledgments of obligations which are
 " overpaid: if ever man performed his duty
 " from

“ from a selfish motive, I may be said to have
 “ done it : is it possible to purchase my pre-
 “ sent feelings at too high a price ! how for-
 “ tunate then am I, who enjoy them in conse-
 “ quence of a single act of duty ! ” “ Thus,”
 said Mr. Barker, “ thus it ever is with great
 “ minds ; those acknowledgments, which,
 “ with others, are the only motive to a ge-
 “ nerous action, form to them the only pain-
 “ ful part of it.” “ I must, I must have
 “ no more of this,” cried Sir Charles. “ In-
 “ deed but you must,” exclaimed old Mr.
 Barker, opening the door at that instant ;
 “ you shall not, Sir Charles, have the credit
 “ of new moulding my heart, and making
 “ me detest my former self, without being
 “ thanked by those who feel the benefit of
 “ the change.” “ They have more than
 “ thanked me, Mr. Barker,” said Sir Charles ;
 “ they have, they will pray for me.” “ They
 “ have ! ” interrupted the old gentleman,
 “ what are their benefits to mine ? I, Sir, am
 “ the person most obliged ; see, Sir, see the
 “ present you have made me ; look at my son,
 “ my daughter, and that little innocent wretch,
 “ all of whom I had in wantonness thrown
 “ away, and lost for ever, had not your huma-
 “ nity taken them up and restored them to me,
 “ when most I began to feel the misery of my
 VOL. II. D “ loss

“ loss. And shall not I thank you? Shall not
“ I pray for you too? Yes, Sir,” cried
he, sobbing, “ never shall one of those days
“ which you have made happy, or those
“ nights which you have made comfortable,
“ pass without such earnest fervent prayers
“ for your happiness, as I am convinced hea-
“ ven will not reject.” O, Sir !” continued
he, wringing Sir Charles’s hand, “ it is owing
“ to you that I ever sleep quiet again.”
Sir Charles turned to the window.—There
is something in the tears of an old man af-
fecting beyond expression. The distress of
a young man, however deep, has a thousand
alleviating circumstances; youth, strength,
health, enable him to bear up under misfor-
tunes, and with the assistance of a good con-
science render him superior to adversity, and
give him moreover a moral hope of see-
ing better days: but how very widely
different is the case with a man whose
misfortunes come upon him at a time when
even the comforts of life lose half their relish;
his faculties weakened, his friends gone or
estranged, his hopes overclouded, his reflec-
tions embittered by the sad retrospect of plea-
sures past, of joys forfeited by the baseness
of others, or his own imprudence, and
his views for after-enjoyments cut short,

by

by the natural period of all earthly good; then, when ill-timed misfortunes bear hard upon him and force the tears from those eyes which he had hoped to close in peace, when the ideas of helpless age and poignant grief enter the mind together, what heart can stand the attack! No, there is not in nature a sight so affecting as the tears of an old man.—“The prayers of good people,” said Sir Charles, after a moment’s recollection, “are ever valuable; you have obliged me, Sir, more than I can have obliged you.” “Impossible,” cried Mr. Barker.

It is difficult to say where this contest would have ended, if a servant had not opened the door and announced dinner.

The company brightened up, and the old gentleman recovering his chearfulness, threw an air of pleasantry into the conversation, which mixing with their inward sensations, made their happiness to be envied. Mrs. Barker shewed so much good sense, politeness, and sweetness of disposition, that Sir Charles could not help drawing a comparison which made him feel the greatest degree of satisfaction from her conversation: there was something too

in the air of her person which justified the idea, and gave him such a prepossession in her favour as made him happy in the prospect of a friendship which on his part was formed the instant they met, and on hers long before.



CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles visits Mrs. Stapleton, and walks a-shopping with her.

WHEN Sir Charles came home he found a card from Mrs Stapleton, informing him that she was arrived in town, and should be glad to see him in Bond-Street whenever he pleased. He wanted not any farther invitation to a place where he was at least sure of hearing of Miss Clayton, if not from her: he therefore went as soon as he had breakfasted the next morning, and found her reading a letter which Miss Clayton had left for her at her lodgings, before she went out of town. "This letter," said she, "Sir Charles, gives me an account of an adventure fortunate beyond expectation; an interview so un- hoped for was worth half a dozen premeditated ones. But poor Harriet has suffered for it, for both Sir Harry and Lady Clayton insist upon it that you came so speedily to town in consequence of an assignation with her. Sir Isaac too pretended to give himself airs about it, it seems, and talked

“ in a very high stile, and that Miss Clayton
“ used him ill in giving you encouragement
“ before his face ; and he would have her con-
“ sider that such offers as his were not to be met
“ with every day ; that there were few families
“ who would not be proud of the honour of
“ his alliance. There by great good luck he
“ went a step too far ; for Sir Harry took
“ him up and said many flourishing things
“ about his family, which Sir Isaac did not
“ thoroughly relish ; and, in short, they
“ parted for the evening in such very mode-
“ rate temper with each other, that I am in
“ great hopes, with a little of my assistance,
“ Sir Harry will be so disgusted with the arro-
“ gance of this upstart knight, that he will
“ have no great inclination for being plagued
“ with it all the rest of his life.”

Sir Charles was delighted with this account,
and conceived great hope of matters turning
out better than they had seemed to promise.
“ And when, Madam,” said he, “ do you
“ propose joining the party ?” “ My dear Sir
“ Charles,” replied she, “ have a moment’s
“ patience: I am but this instant arrived in
“ town, do not be in such a hurry to get rid
“ of me again. How is it, that with even
“ the politest of you men, a passion for one
“ woman swallows up all your consideration
“ for

"for the rest of the sex? I thought you would
 "have been so rejoiced to see me, nothing
 "could be like it, and the very first word you
 "say is, When do you go?"

Sir Charles made the best apology he was
 able, and by way of recompence begged to have
 the honour of being her escorte and assistant in
 any business she might have to do whilst she
 staid in town.

"I take you at your word," said she. "I
 "have forty things to buy in Tavistock-
 "Street, and it is so fine a morning, I have an
 "inclination to walk; will you give me your
 "company?" "Most willingly," replied Sir
 Charles; and so they sallied out together.
 They called at forty places, and bought and
 bespoke forty things. "Here is a shop,"
 said Mrs. Stapleton, "in this neighbourhood,
 "to which I was recommended by my milli-
 "ner at Bath: it is kept by a young woman,
 "a friend of hers lately set up in business,
 "and I shall now call and bespeak some
 "things out of civility to Mrs. Cook." The
 person who kept the shop seemed to be about
 five-and-thirty: her face had the remains of
 beauty, and her air had a certain ease, which
 contrasted with a little awkwardness in her
 manner of executing her business, gave Sir
 Charles an idea that she had not been brought

up in the way she was now in. Mrs. Stapleton bespoke some millinery articles, and wanting to give her a direction where to send them, asked for a pen and ink and a piece of paper. The pen and ink were ready, but no paper being at hand, Sir Charles pulled his letters out of his pocket, and gave her the covers. As she was writing her address on one, the other lay upon the counter, and Sir Charles thought he observed the person of the shop look at it with some attention: just casting his eyes upon one of the letters as he put them into his pocket again, "My friend," said he, "would think himself very happy if he knew what use I have made of his covers. You don't know my friend Norris, Mrs. Stapleton; I promise myself great satisfaction in presenting him to the honour of your acquaintance."

Mrs. Stapleton had finished her direction, and looking up, was surprized to see the person of the shop pale and trembling. "Are you ill, Madam?" said Mrs. Stapleton.

She apologised for her confusion: said she was very subject to giddinesses in her head, blushed, smelt at her salts, said it was nothing more than usual, curtsied, begged pardon, said she would be sure to send the things, hoped

hoped if her ladyship wanted any thing else, she would be so good as to permit her to call her partner, as she found herself very ill.

Mrs. Stapleton said no, she had done, wished her better, and left the shop.

Sir Charles thought there was something particular in her behaviour, and when they were got into the street, asked Mrs. Stapleton who she was. "I know no more of her," said she, "than that her name is Bond; that she was a little while in Mrs. Cook's shop at Bath, and has lately taken this shop in partnership with another person."

Sir Charles knew nobody of that name, so concluded he was mistaken, and thought no more of the affair. When they arrived at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings, Sir Charles said he would not break in upon the business of her toilet; but asked if he might have the honour to attend her in the evening at home, or any where else. "Why no," said she; "to-night I give to a tête-à-tête party with a friend whom I have not seen for a long time: but to-morrow morning, if you are inclined for another walk, I shall be glad to see you at breakfast; and remember, I bespeak you for the evening, to escorte my friend and me to the opera. I am willing to make the most of

D 5

" my.

“ my time, for now you are very civil, and
“ don’t drive me out of town, I will tell you
“ that I intend going into Suffolk the day af-
“ ter to-morrow.” Sir Charles promised to
attend her, and having assured her, which was
indeed true, that nothing but the absolute ne-
cessity Miss Clayton had for her assistance,
could keep him from feeling the greatest regret
at her going out of town, he took his leave.



.C H A P. VII.

*Sir Charles forms a Scheme. Remarks on it.
Entertains the Barkers at Dinner. Con-
versation Piece. Dissertation on Mu-
sic.*

WHEN Sir Charles came home, he found a letter from Norris, which, as soon as he had dressed himself, he sat down to answer: but as the Barkers were to dine with him, he did not seal up his letter till they came, that Mr. J. Barker might, if he pleased, add a postscript.

I shall not, reader, trouble you with this letter, as it contained little more than an account of what you have seen passing in the last four or five chapters: only he tells Mr. Norris that he is determined to come down to the hall in a few days; and the postscript informs him that all the Barker family have promised to be of the party; but upon condition that he will return with them to town.

This letter was also filled with encomiums on Mrs. Stapleton, with whom Sir Charles

was so much taken, that, like Bartholomew Cokes, he was almost ready to cry, "Would I might marry her too!" but as that was impossible, he had formed a scheme in his head, which he longed very much to accomplish: in short, he had fallen in love with her as proxy for his friend; and as his conversation to Mrs. Stapleton ran very much upon the virtues of Mr. Norris, so his letters to him were as full of the praises of Mrs. Stapleton; by which means he hoped, by the time they met, they would be so far from strangers to each other, that the business would be half done.

His scheme was not an improbable one; for whatever we may imagine, likes and dislikes depend more upon prejudice than many people are aware of; and perhaps we cannot often give a better reason for being fond of any one, than because he or she is a great favourite with a person of whose judgment we have a high opinion, and for whom we have a very great value.

Now, as both these parties had the highest esteem for, and opinion of Sir Charles, it was not improbable that his word would go as far, nay, perhaps farther, with both of them, than even their own judgments.

Your romantic young ladies and gentlemen, who are all for love at first sight, and who rave about *penchant* and sympathy, and all that, will probably be shocked at the thought of taking a lover or a mistress upon recommendation: but with people who have not more sentiment than sense, I am not sure whether it is not the wisest way. "The heart," says one who was reckoned a sensible man in his time, "is deceitful above all things, who can know it?" And in nothing is it more so than in the affair of falling in love as it is called. In general, a look, a smile, an eye, a mouth, nay even a suit of cloaths, gives the heart such a twist in favour of a person, as determines its bent in spite of all that reason can do to set it right again: so that it is highly probable the affair is irrecoverably concluded, before experience can have time to inform the judgment how deceitful the heart has been.

Now if we were to take a recommendation of a lover or a mistress from those who have the use of their eyes and judgment at liberty, and in short take none without a character from their last service, we might not lie quite so much at the mercy of the heart as we now do. Sometimes indeed, as in the case of servants, we might find a difficulty
in

in getting a true character; friendship may say too much, and enmity too little; but when the heart is unprejudiced, one standing rule observed, which is always to take a character from one of the opposite sex, with a few grains of allowance for accidental connections, will bring the matter pretty near to a certainty.—
“What then are we to hire lovers at a statute? Are all the sublime transports of an enraptured heart to be restrained by the cold, unfeeling judgment? Shall love, almighty love, keep a Register-office?” I beg pardon, Miss, I thought not of love, I was talking of marriage.

After dinner the conversation happened to turn upon music. Sir Charles and young Barker canvassed the merits of different composers and performers with freedom and candor; and Sir Charles was not a little pleased to find that his new acquired friend had a delicacy of taste, and an accuracy of judgment, which do not fall to the share of many musical people. Old Mr. Barker was silent, but attentive. “I dare say,” said Sir Charles, “that you think your son and me a couple of coxcombs in your heart, for making such a piece of work with these matters.”

“Pardon me,” replied he, “the enthusiasm which you both seem to feel when
“you

“ you speak of *Leo* and *Pergolesi*, and other
 “ authors, is, I own, above my comprehension, because, from a want of distinction in
 “ my ear, the beauties which occasion it are
 “ so : but I cannot help thinking that you
 “ have as great an advantage over me, as I
 “ have, when I am in raptures with a passage
 “ in Virgil, or Horace, over a man who cannot read Latin. Indeed, what use do we
 “ hope to derive from any speculative knowledge, and what is our reason for wishing
 “ to acquire an insight into any science ; but
 “ by that means to encrease our prospect of
 “ happiness, by opening fresh sources of delight ? Surely then, I must rather think
 “ myself labouring under a misfortune, who
 “ am denied, by a natural defect, having any
 “ knowledge of that source from whence you
 “ derive such exquisite satisfaction.” “ There
 “ are few unmusical people,” said Mrs. Barker, “ who judge so candidly of this matter. I
 “ acknowledge that I have frequently been
 “ afraid of expressing my satisfaction as I
 “ would have wished, for fear of being taxed
 “ with affectation.”

“ It is impossible,” replied old Mr. Barker,
 “ for people always to distinguish between a
 “ real taste for a thing, and the affectation of
 “ it : and, in an age so full of pretended
 “ con-

“ connoisseurs as this is, I am not surprized
“ that people generally suspect affectation. I
“ myself am very apt to do it; and I dare say
“ often wrong many an intelligent person.
“ Sir Charles, I thank him, when we met at
“ the opera, helped me to a clue to find out a
“ *faux connoisseur* by; they always make most
“ noise with their sensations, and take the
“ most pains to make you think that they
“ feel.” “ Indeed, Mr. Barker,” said Sir
Charles, “ that rule will often lead you into
“ an error; for I know many people who
“ really feel, and can no more help ex-
“ pressing themselves in a rapturous kind of
“ way to those who are near them, than they
“ can help crying out if they are in pain.”
“ That,” said young Barker, “ entirely depends
“ upon the temper and constitution: some
“ people will suffer the most exquisite pain
“ without uttering a word or a sigh; some
“ will cry out and groan for the head-ach:
“ it is just the same with regard to pleasure;
“ some will never let you know whether they
“ are pleased or not, whilst others double
“ their pleasure by expressing it.”

“ Why here then,” cried the old gentle-
man, “ I am all abroad again. I suppose
“ now you or Sir Charles would know a real
“ connoisseur from a pretended one at first
“ sight;

“ fight; why cannot I?” “ Because,” replied Sir Charles, “ you are not a brother. “ We are like Free-masons, and have our “ signs to know one another by, which the “ rest of the world cannot find out. You “ never can find out what is wrong, unless “ you know what is right: a man must not “ only express his satisfaction by his words “ or gestures, he must express it in a right “ manner and a right place, to convince us “ that he feels. It is the same thing in any “ other science; a man can never pass for an “ adept by getting the terms by heart, unless “ he knows how to apply them.” “ Well,” said old Mr. Barker, “ I acknowledge I envy “ people who have an ear, and a capability of “ enjoying music. My daughter there says “ I am candid; and, with regard to this matter, I believe I am. I think it very hard, “ though no musical man myself, that music “ should be grudged its place amongst the “ sciences: and yet I find it is the fashion “ with many overwise men to treat it with “ the contempt which it never has been used “ to meet with, and certainly cannot deserve, “ in any age or country. It has been called, “ rather degradingly, the handmaid to the “ arts; but these people treat her worse than “ the veriest kitchen wench. When I was “ last

“ last at Cambridge, I found some people of
 “ my own standing, who, from a long course
 “ of metaphysics and algebra, had contracted
 “ a certain hardness of heart, which makes
 “ it impenetrable to any finer sensations, who
 “ had persuaded themselves, and endeavoured
 “ to persuade others, that a knowledge of
 “ music was at least despicable, and a fond-
 “ ness for it little short of criminal. If you
 “ mentioned any young man of lively parts,
 “ who was not insensible to harmony, they
 “ shook their heads, or turned up their noses,
 “ and said he is a very good fidler! As if a
 “ man’s excelling in one thing, was a hin-
 “ drance to him in every other acquirement.
 “ They reminded me of a remark of La
 “ Bruiere; I think his words are something
 “ like these, *Les vûës courtes, je veux dire les*
 “ *esprits bornez et resserrez dans leur petite sphere*
 “ *ne peuvent comprendre cette universalité de ta-*
 “ *lens que l’on remarque quelquefois dans un meme*
 “ *sujet; ou ils voyent l’agréable, ils en excluent*
 “ *le solide: ils otent de l’histoire de Socrate qu’il*
 “ *ait dansé.* I acknowledge I was hurt to hear
 “ any thing so illiberal in one of the seats of
 “ the muses, and could not help taking them
 “ to task after my way. I asked them where
 “ they got these unworthy notions of music?
 “ I was sure their dear friends, the great an-
 “ cients,

" cients, taught them none such; that if they
 " would come a little lower, and consult *Mei-*
 " *bomius*, they would find some very respectable
 " names, with their friend *Euclid*, at the head
 " of them, who have left elaborate treatises
 " upon the science; and as to the moderns,
 " if they would give themselves the trouble
 " to look into the world, farther I mean than
 " *Hogmagog Hills* or *Trumpington*, they would
 " find that the greatest and wisest men of our
 " own times had not disdained to take music
 " into the circle of the sciences. Nay, if they
 " looked even amongst themselves, they would
 " find the greatest ornaments of their own
 " body were at the same time their greatest
 " musicians. I grew at last quite warm: I was
 " just come from Trinity College, whose great
 " court still resounded with the lamentations
 " of the society, for the loss of my valuable
 " old friend there, who, though he never
 " could make a musician of me, had in-
 " structed me early in the theory of harmony,
 " and convinced me long since by his own
 " example that an enthusiastic fondness for
 " music, was far from being incompatible
 " with every valuable acquirement of the
 " head, and was a promoter of every amiable
 " affection of the heart. Had'st thou been
 " here, ever valuable friend," cried I,
 address-

addressing myself to his idea, " thou would'st
 " have taught these torpid men, with half
 " thy greatness of mind, and a tythe of thy
 " liberality and goodness of heart, that the
 " human soul is not to be confined within a
 " circle, and portioned out by segments, but
 " will open and expand itself in a ratio that they
 " know not of ! Mundungus was astonished,
 " Fogramo said I was mad, Ventosus would
 " have run for a surgeon : but not one of
 " them has a better opinion of music yet, for
 " all I could say."—The company was much
 diverted with the old gentleman's warmth,
 which seemed the more generous, as it was in
 favour of a science to which he professed him-
 self a stranger. Not that he was void of all
 distinction in it, for he loved such music as
 was within his comprehension, and had a pe-
 culiar pleasure in hearing his daughter sing.
 When they retired into the drawing-room to
 coffee, Sir Charles led Mrs. Barker to the
 harpsichord, and begged that she would tell
 him if it was in tune, for that he had hardly
 touched it since he came to town. She made
 no difficulty of sitting down to it, and ran
 over the keys in such a manner as shewed she
 had no occasion. " Come," said old Mr.
 Barker, " play something without telling any
 " lies about being out of practice, and all
 " that."

“that.” “My dear Sir,” said she, “I never make any difficulty of playing to people who know how to make allowances; it is your half musicians that I am afraid of.” She played a lesson of *Scarlatti* with great execution. Sir Charles commended her finger. She tried another, but puzzled herself in one or two passages, and Sir Charles leaning over her chair, just shewed her an easier way of fingering them. “I knew,” said she, “I should rather get than lose by playing to Sir Charles.” After coffee, Sir Charles ordered two fiddles, and he and young Barker accompanied her to some songs. She sung in a quiet, pathetic kind of stile, which often gives a real lover of music more pleasure than all the theatrical execution that can be exerted. They staid supper with Sir Charles, and parted more and more delighted with one another.

C H A P. VIII.

Sir Charles receives a Present, and writes a Letter of Thanks.

SIR Charles went to Mrs. Stapleton's the next morning, according to his appointment. His watch was too fast, or her's too slow, she was not stirring. He seated himself by the dining-room fire, and was amusing himself with the news-paper which lay upon the table, when her maid entered with a little shagreen case. "My lady, Sir," said she, "begs your pardon for making you wait for your breakfast, but has sent you this to stay your stomach." He took it, and opened it; he would have been contented to have staid 'till noon or night for his breakfast; 'twas Miss Clayton's picture: and though he had a far better picture of her in his heart, as he had her there at full length, body and mind together, yet he looked at it with the highest delight. "'Tis very like her," said he. The painter had not done her justice neither; he had given her a smile, but it was a starched prim smile; 'twas not a smile of intelligence.

“ Fool !” said he, “ her smiles always mean
 “ kindness, or complacency, or condescen-
 “ sion, or civility, or something amiable ;
 “ this is a smile which nobody can translate.
 “ ’Tis not so like as I thought it was. Then
 “ her eyes are dead ; no life, no lustre ; the
 “ colour in her cheeks is too settled, too like
 “ art, there is not that bloom, that — it is
 “ not like her at all. Though, after all, I be-
 “ lieve it is as much as art can do. No pic-
 “ ture can be very like her, unless it could
 “ speak and think. But still thou art her
 “ image, though a poor lifeless one : where
 “ is that animated fire in your eyes ?” —
 “ I profess I don’t know,” said Mrs. Staple-
 ton, entering at that instant ; “ slept out I
 “ believe, for it is a shameful time of day.”
 “ Here,” said Sir Charles, “ take back the
 “ idol you sent me, I have paid my devotions
 “ to it, and though I have a far better like-
 “ ness of my own, I was growing into hu-
 “ mour with it so fast, that, had you staid
 “ a few minutes longer, you had never seen
 “ it more.” “ Why, don’t you think it
 “ like her ?” said Mrs. Stapleton. “ *Cosi,*
 “ *cosi,*” replied Sir Charles ; “ I believe it
 “ may be as like her as it is in the power of
 “ paint to make one ; but the beauty of Miss
 “ Clayton’s face is, that you see through it
 “ into

“into her heart.” “O very well,” said Mrs. Stapleton, taking the picture, “I’ll send it back, and tell her you don’t like it; there’s no harm done.” “Why, you did not mean to give it me!” cried he. “Not I,” replied she. “Harriet sat for it before she left Bath; she was forced to go away before it was quite finished, so desired me to receive it, and give it to you in her name; but as that was when she was in a great fright lest she should never see you again, may be she has changed her mind by this time, and will be glad to have her picture again.” “Cruel Mrs. Stapleton,” cried Sir Charles, “how you love to perplex! As *your* picture I found fault with it, for wanting that nameless something which paint cannot express; but the considering it as *mine*, and given nobly, frankly, unsolicited, unhopd for, will abundantly supply that defect. Let me receive it as I ought,” cried he, kneeling down and putting the picture to his lips, “and if you have the least regard for me, say not a word of what has passed.” The maid that instant coming in with the tea-kettle, Sir Charles sprang up, with a little awkward confusion, and Mrs. Jenny going down into the kitchen, told every body that her lady was going to be married, for that the handsome

handsome gentleman was upon his knees to her, and she was sure she could not refuse him any thing he asked. " You talked to me " yesterday of a friend of yours," said Mrs. Stapleton, " to-night I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to a friend of mine, " Lady Mary *Warren*; do you know her?" " I do not," said Sir Charles; " but if she " was Lady Mary Beville, as I think she was, " I have the honour of being related to her." " How nearly?" said Mrs. Stapleton. " Why," replied he, " ours is another " branch of the same family, and we are so " nearly related, that if her two brothers, " the present Lord Beville and a younger " one, should die without children, I should " succeed to the estate and title." " That is " not very likely," said Mrs. Stapleton, " as " my lord is lately married, and Mr. George " Beville is a young man at the University. " But I am glad I know this; I think it may " be of some use with regard to Sir Harry " Clayton: I wonder you never told him of " this connection." " Why, really," said Sir Charles, " it is a prospect from which it " is so unlikely that I should ever reap " any advantage, that I should have been " ashamed to have laid any stress upon it." " You are much too generous to live in this

VOL. II. E " cunning

“cunning world,” replied she, “and therefore, I don’t think you will be of much use to me this morning, for I am going to buy a gown, and I know I shall be ashamed to beat Mr. Silvertongue down before you, as I should do if I was by myself, and so I expect to lose some few shillings by you.”
 “Not this morning I fear,” replied he, “for I think the rain will prevent our walk.”
 “Rains !”—cried she, “why so it does ; and now as I have so much to do, and so little time to do it in, I think I would borrow your coach, and whilst it is sending for, if I knew what to do with you, I would have an hour’s conference with a very important gentleman at the next door, my hair-dresser.” “Shut me up here,” said Sir Charles, “with pen, ink and paper, and let me thank my Harriet for her picture.”
 “Agreed,” said she ; and so Sir Charles having dispatched her servant for the coach, sat down and wrote the following letter :

IT is impossible, my dearest Madam, for any one who is not in love to conceive the pleasure Mrs. Stapleton has just given me : be not alarmed ; it is impossible for any lady to give me pleasure, but by your means. Till this instant I thought myself a tolerable good

protestant Christian ; but never was such an idolater as I am become. Never did the voriest heathen pay such adoration to the image of his Venus, nor the most zealous papist to that of his Virgin, as I do to mine ; but like them, I excuse my idolatry by saying, that I only adore the image, as it leads me to the consideration of something better : whether that excuse will bring them off or not, I cannot tell ; but I am sure it will me. But, call me ungrateful if you will, I am not satisfied. For the first ten minutes after I received your image I was in raptures, and commended the painter to the skies. The next ten, when I had perused it about two thousand times, I began to sigh, and feel a miss of something that paint cannot express ; in short, I began to find, that unless a picture could be made to speak and think, it can convey but a very poor idea of you at best : and now that I have been in possession of it a full half hour, and have examined it about a million of times, I feel that the faint ideas it gives me of you serve only to put me in mind, that whilst I am gazing at the copy, the original is far, far from my sight. And is this the return you will say for having so generously given you what you had not the assurance to ask for, and for having shewn you that I not only thought of you

when you was absent, but wished you to think of me? No, my charming Harriet, it is not the return I make to all these unmerited favours; I have every grateful sense of them that it is possible for man to have: but I only now am telling you the real sentiments of my heart, merely to shew you how honest a heart it is, which can confess even its own weakness and unreasonableness to you. In short, it does not signify to disguise the truth, give me any thing but yourself, and I shall still be dissatisfied.—I am now writing at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings. The vain thing is now under the hands of her *friseur*, who is twisting and twirling her hair into five thousand strange shapes, in order for her to make conquests at the opera to-night. She is forced to take up with me by way of *escorte*, though she says you have absolutely spoilt me for a slave; that I have not a civil thing left for any other woman; and that at the very instant that I am so happy as to enjoy a tête-à-tête with her, I am, in my heart, wishing her in Suffolk; and there I am almost afraid she says but too true; for I fear my cause will go on but poorly till my counsel arrives. She thinks she has found out a plea in my favour, which may have weight with the court; for my part, I think it is a dishonest reckoning; but if a man was

SIR CHARLES BEVILLE. 77

to bar his counsel all the chicane of the law, he might as well give up his cause at once ; so let her make the best of it. I have some thoughts of passing a few weeks at the hall, by way of having some business to fill up that time which will hang so heavily on my hands. The Barkers have promised me their company, and Norris returns with us to town, as soon as the holidays are over. Surely, surely, by that time, the cause may be decided in my favour, or at least be in such a train that I need no longer play at bo-peep, like a rat behind a waincot ; but may step out boldly, and acknowledge to all the world, how high an honour I esteem it to have the liberty of subscribing myself,

Your most devoted humble servant,

C. BEVILLE.

CHAP. IX.

*Conversation-pieces upon Head-dresses, Propriety,
and various other Matters.*

SIR Charles had just finished his letter when Mrs. Stapleton entered the room, with a head very different from that with which she left it. "Pray, Madam," said Sir Charles, "may I beg the favour of the name of your head?" "This, Sir," said she, "is *un tete de mouton*." Pardon me, replied he, "the air it gives you has so little of the sheepish in it, that I should never have imagined it." "Now, my dear Sir Charles," cried she, "you are going to run on with a string of common-place observations about nature and beauty, and all that; now you must know there is nothing I hate so much as an argument which I cannot contradict, and therefore if you please I will allow you, that all you can say against this preposterous fashion, is very sensible and very natural; but then you must allow me, that I have a right to be foolish and unnatural if I like it." "But a woman of your sense,"—said Sir Charles. "That's very true," replied she,

she, " but I never yet met with a woman
 " who had sense enough to go directly con-
 " trary to the fashion. Besides, what a vain
 " wretch must I be to think the whole town
 " fools but myself ! I assure you, Sir Charles,
 " I think it is a great presumption in little
 " folks to pretend to have fashions of their
 " own. If I was a dutchess, I might consult
 " reason, and sense, and inclination, and should
 " have my due praise for it ; but as I am
 " poor Emily Stapleton, if I consult any
 " thing but the fashion, I shall only be called
 " an affected fool, and laughed at for pre-
 " tending to think for myself, when my bet-
 " ters are contented to let their milliners and
 " mantua-makers think for them." " It is
 " very true," replied Sir Charles, " I had
 " forgot that I settled it with myself the other
 " night, that no one had a right to have
 " more sense and reason than the world chuse
 " to allow them."—The coach being by this
 time arrived, they both stepped into it ; and
 having dispatched a multitude of business, Sir
 Charles brought Mrs. Stapleton home again,
 and took his leave, promising to attend her in
 the evening.

He came about six o'clock, and Mrs. Sta-
 pleton introduced him to his cousin Lady Mary
 Warren. She was a widow of about forty ;

agreeable in her person, but had a gravity in her air which Sir Charles mistook for melancholy; he soon found it was only a tincture of prudery in her character, which threw a little reserve into her behaviour to strangers, which however wore off by degrees, till it quite disappeared. “Sir Charles,” said Mrs. Stapleton, “I have been telling Lady Mary
 “that you and I had settled it this morning,
 “that it was impossible to set the world at
 “defiance; and she will have it, that I have
 “been doing that very thing, in going
 “about with you a whole day in your coach,
 “without some *chaperon* or other, to save
 “appearances. I tell her, if I was a young
 “girl indeed, it might not be so prudent; but
 “an old widow”——“A young widow,
 “you mean,” said Lady Mary——“But, my
 “dear Stapleton, did not you promise me that
 “you would not call Sir Charles in to your assistance in this argument?” “You suppose then,” said Mrs. Stapleton, “that
 “he must necessarily be on my side of the
 “question?” “Or I dare say,” replied Sir Charles, “her ladyship would think I little
 “deserved the honour you did me: but even
 “setting that aside, I am afraid, Madam, I
 “must have been against your ladyship in this
 “argument. I cannot think the world is
 “come

"come to such a pass that a man and woman
 "cannot go in the same carriage without an
 "imputation of some criminal connection."
 "The world, Sir Charles," said Lady Mary,
 "is very censorious." "It is, Madam," re-
 plied Sir Charles; "but I have observed that
 "even the most censorious people chuse to have
 "probability on their side, and that a lady's
 "character cannot have been free from ble-
 "mish, which a slight random imputation,
 "unsupported by any concurrent circum-
 "stances, can affect. It requires, Madam,
 "a very great degree of assurance to make an
 "attack upon an unblemished character."
 "But, Sir Charles," said Lady Mary, "is
 "it a rare thing to meet with people who
 "have that degree, or every degree of as-
 "surance?" "And how, Madam," said Sir
 Charles, "will your ladyship permit me to
 "ask, are the insinuations of such people to
 "be guarded against? Does your ladyship
 "imagine that going three in a coach will do
 "it? People cannot live by threes; and if
 "they could, I am afraid it would be no dif-
 "ficult matter to find third persons who
 "might be of very little restraint." "Do you
 "think then, Sir Charles," said Lady Mary,
 "that appearances are quite to be neglected?"
 "Why, Madam," replied he, "I hate all ge-
 "neral

" neral rules : but with regard to criminal
 " appearances, I cannot help thinking, that
 " if people would seriously make a point of
 " living to their own hearts and consciences,
 " and of never doing any thing to reproach
 " themselves for, they would very seldom
 " meet with the reproach of the world." I
 " hope," said Mrs. Stapleton, " that you will
 " both allow that I have held my tongue a
 " long time ; and now I will venture to ask a
 " question ; Do we intend to go to the opera
 " to-night ? because if we do, it is high time
 " to go."—" You are very impertinent," said
 Lady Mary, " for in five minutes more Sir
 " Charles would have convinced me that
 " every body may do any thing that has no
 " harm in it." " Well then," said Mrs. Sta-
 pleton, " as a proof that you are well-nigh
 " brought over, and as there are three of us,
 " I hope you will give his coach leave to carry
 " us, and send your chairmen home, or else
 " I shall certainly be tempted to go with him
 " by myself." Lady Mary said she had no
 objection ; and so they went off sociably toge-
 ther. The conversation was renewed in the
 coach. " For my part," said Sir Charles,
 " I ask pardon, ladies ; but I am very much
 " of opinion that young ladies are in more
 " danger from great intimacies with their own
 " sex,

“sex; than from any general intercourse with
 “ours.” So!” said Mrs. Stapleton. “I am really
 “of Sir Charles’s opinion,” said Lady Mary,
 “for I am sure I know ladies who, amongst
 “themselves, entertain each other with such
 “conversations, as none of them would
 “bear from the other sex, and I believe but
 “few men would dare to enter into with any
 “ladies who kept up the appearance of mo-
 “desty.” “Upon my word,” cried Mrs.
 Stapleton, “you have done finely by your
 “own nest.” “I know, Stapleton,” said
 Lady Mary, “you think me an intolerable
 “prude; but I am convinced that there is
 “not a more dangerous kind of acquaintance,
 “for young women, than that of some mar-
 “ried ladies, who have, in their intercourse
 “with the world, more discretion than vir-
 “tue. I could point out to you many such,
 “who form intimacies with young women,
 “in the course of which they lay aside that
 “discretion, which as it is not founded in
 “virtue, is only put on when they think
 “there is a necessity for it, and by raising
 “their curiosity, and inflaming their passions,
 “leave them an easy prey to the next attack.”

By this time the coach stopped at the opera-
 house door, and it was very well it did, or
 Lady Mary’s zeal against the indiscreet part

of her own sex, might have hurried her into some concessions, which would not have been so much to their credit.

Nothing very material passed at the opera, except an observation of Mrs. Stapleton's, "that a musical man is the worst companion in the world at a musical entertainment." Sir Charles set the ladies down at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings, and having begged her to let him hear from her as soon as she arrived in Suffolk, took his leave, and went home, determined to set out the next morning for the hall, whither the Barkers were to accompany him.

END of the FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

CASTLE-BUILDING;

An ELEGY.

—Sweet pliability of man's spirit, that can
at once surrender itself to illusions which cheat
expectation and sorrow of their weary mo-
ments.

STERNE'S Sentimental Journey.

GODDESS of golden dreams, whose
magic pow'r

Sheds smiles of joy o'er Mis'ry's haggard
face,

And

And lavish strews the visionary flow'r,
 To deck life's dreary paths with transient
 grace.

I woo thee, Fancy, from thy fairy cell,
 Where 'midst the endless woes of human
 kind,
 Wrapt in ideal bliss, thou lov'st to dwell,
 And sport in happier regions unconfin'd.

Deep sunk, O Goddess! in thy pleasing
 trance,
 Oft let me seek yon low sequester'd vale,
 Whilst Wisdom's self shall steal a sidelong
 glance,
 And smile contempt—but listen to thy tale.

Alas! how little do her vot'ries guess
 These rigid truths, which learned' fools
 revere,
 Serve but to prove, O bane to happiness!
 Our joys delusive, but our woes sincere.

Be theirs to search where clustering roses grow,
 Touching each sharp thorn's point, to prove
 how keen;
 Be mine to trace their beauties as they blow,
 And catch their fragrance where they blush
 unseen.

Haply

SIR CHARLES BEVILLE. 87

Haply my path may lie thro' barren vales,
Where niggard Fortune all her sweets denies ;

Ev'n there shall Fancy scent the ambient gales,
And scatter flow'rets of a thousand dyes.

Nor let the worldling scoff: be his the task
To form deep schemes—and mourn his
hopes betray'd ;

Be mine to range unseen, 'tis all I ask,
And frame new worlds beneath the silent
shade.

To look beyond the views of wealth and pride,
Bidding the mind's eye range without con-
troul,

Through wild, extatic day-dreams, far and
wide,

To bring returns of comfort to the soul.

To bid groves, hills, and lucid streams ap-
pear,

The gilded spire, arch'd dome, and fretted
vault ;

And sweet society be ever near,

Love, ever young, and friends without a
fault.

I see

I see entranc'd the gay conceptions rise,
 My harvests ripen, and my white flocks
 thrive ;
 And still as Fancy pours her large supplies,
 I taste the god-like happiness to give.

To check the patient widow's deep-fetch'd
 sighs,
 And shield her infant from the north-blast
 rude ;
 To bid the sweetly-glistening tear arise,
 Which swims in the glad eye of gratitude.

To join the artless maid and honest swain,
 Where fortune rudely bars the way to joy ;
 To ease the tender mother's anxious pain,
 And guard, with soft'ring hand, her darling
 boy.

To raise up modest merit from the ground,
 And send the unhappy smiling from my
 door ;

To spread content and cheerfulness around,
 And banquet on the blessings of the poor.

Delicious dream ! how oft beneath thy pow'r,
 Thus light'ning the sad load of other's woe,
 I steal from rigid fate one happy hour,
 Nor feel I want the pity I bestow.

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE. 89.

Delicious dream ! how often dost thou give
A gleam of bliss, which truth would but
destroy ;

Oft dost thou bid my drooping heart revive,
And catch one chearful glimpse of transient
joy.

And O how precious is that timely friend,
Who checks affliction in her dread ca-
reer !

Who knows distress, well knows that he may
lend

One hour of life, who stops one rising
tear.

O, but for thee, long since the hand of
Care

Had mark'd with livid pale my furrow'd
cheek ;

Long since the shiv'ring grasp of cold De-
spair

Had chill'd my heart, and taught it how to
break.

For ah ! Affliction steals with trackless flight ;

Silent the stroke she gives, but not less keen :

And bleak Misfortune, like an eastern blight,

Sheds black destruction, though it flies un-
seen.

O come

O come then Fancy, and with lenient
hand

Dry my moist cheek and smooth my fur-
row'd brow ;

Bear me o'er smiling tracts of Fairy
land,

And give me more than Fortune can be-
stow.

Mix'd are her boons, and chequer'd all with
ill,

Her smiles, the sunshine of an April
morn,

The cheerless valley skirts the gilded
hill,

And latent storms in ev'ry gale are
borne.

Give me thy hope, which sickens not the
heart ;

Give me thy wealth, which has no wings
to fly ;

Give me the pride thy honours can im-
part ;

Thy friendship give me, warm in po-
verty,

Give

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE. 91

Give me a wish the worldling may deride,

The wise may censure, and the proud may
hate ;

Wrapt in thy dreams to lay the world aside,

And snatch a bliss beyond the reach of
fate.



CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Party arrive at Stoney-Stratford. Meet a Stranger there, and go to the Play.

SIR Charles's post-coach, containing the two Mr. Barkers, Mrs. Barker and himself, set out for the hall in reasonable time the next morning; and as Sir Charles was not at present engaged in any pursuit which according to his notions could justify going post, he proposed sleeping on the road; which, as his house was but seventy miles from London, astonished young Barker, and delighted his father.

"How much pleasanter and easier," said the young man, "it is to travel post! I wonder, Sir Charles, you don't prefer it." "So don't I," said the elder. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast. As I do not much believe in Pythagoras's transmigration scheme, I cannot wish thee a post-horse, Jere; but for one cold, bleak, finger-squeezing night, I do wish thou wast a post-boy; we should then hear whether the wonder would not be, that any body could

“could think of travelling post.” The young man was a little confounded; Mrs. Barker sighed: her reflections possibly led her to times when such a wish might have had some probability of being accomplished. The old gentleman translated her sigh, and was sensible that it reproached him for having raised painful ideas in her mind: he felt that it needed an apology; he took her hand, and with a look of kindness put it to his lips. She was as quick at translation as he, and resumed her usual gaiety in an instant—Good company upon the road makes always the shortest cut: no wonder therefore that our party thought the day’s journey to Stoney-Stratford almost as expeditiously performed as if they had travelled post. They arrived in good time, and having ordered tea, the gentlemen strolled into the yard. “And what parts do you usually perform?” said a voice which issued from behind a barn door, and which was far from being unknown to Sir Charles and young Barker. “Why, Sir,” said Answer, with a broad Irish accent, “I am reckoned excellent in low comedy; Jere Sneak, Abel Drugger, Scrub, and Justice Midas. In tragedy I perform whatever the master of the company bids me with pretty equal success.” “And what,” said Question,

tion, "may you earn a night by playing the
"fool?" "Sometimes," returned Answer,
"five shillings, sometimes as many pence."
"And for this," said Question, "you have
"left your trade?" "Yes, Sir," said Answer;
"but I have the comfort of being an honest
"man, now, which I found, if I was deter-
"mined to be in business, I could not be, and
"earn five farthings a night." "But then,"
said Question, "you had not the chance of
"being whipped for a vagabond?" "The
"more's the pity," said Answer, "that I
"should have less chance of being whipped
"when I was a rogue, than I have now that
"I am reasonably honest. But to say the
"truth, I did not leave my trade, Sir, it left
"me; I broke, Sir." "What business was
"you in?" said Question. "I was a ha-
"berdasher, Sir," returned Answer, "and
"was in a pretty good way; but I married a
"handsome wife, and I loved drinking and
"gaming; and she, I am afraid, loved
"every other vice, so that in a little
"time she ran away from me, and I
"ran away from my creditors. I had
"always a turn for playing the fool, so I
"made a bold push, and going up to Lon-
"don, I offered myself first to Mr. Garrick,
"and he told me I would not do; then I
"went

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE.

“ went to the other house, and they told
“ me the same; and then I went to Mr.
“ Foote, and happening to hesitate a lit-
“ tle in my speech, he told me he had
“ had enough of stuttering Irishmen al-
“ ready; and then I went to sing at Sadler’s
“ Wells, and there the audience told me I
“ would not do; and then I went back to
“ the first theatre, and begged to be employed
“ as a mute or any thing; but finding I could
“ write and read, they took compassion on
“ me, and employed me”——“ To lay the
“ books in the orchestra,” interrupted young
Barker, joining the party, “ and there you
“ got drunk, and put us all out, by laying
“ out Midas instead of Harlequin Ranger,
“ and so you got kicked out of the house,
“ and what became of you afterwards, we
“ shall hear by-and-by: but first I must in-
“ troduce Mr. Norris, (for Question was no
“ other) to my father.”——The meeting be-
tween these two, in a place and manner so
unexpected, took off from the solemnity which
would have otherwise attended it; but not
from the cordial friendship of it. Mr. Barker
in a few words expressed the obligations he
had to Mr. Norris, and the happiness he felt
in an opportunity of being personally known
to one, who, by espousing the cause of his son
so

so warmly, had contributed so much to the happiness of the whole family, the rest of the party felt that joy which every one can so easily conceive at a meeting between people in their situation. All this time poor Answer stood up in one corner in the utmost astonishment, endeavouring in vain to guess who that gentleman could be who knew so much of his concerns. "And what became of you afterwards?" said young Barker. Answer made a low bow. "Why, really, Sir," said he, "since that time I have lived a sort of a kind of a strolling life, sometimes with one company, sometimes with another. I seldom stay long indeed in a company, because as I am pretty much given to living upon trust, when they who do know me will not trust me any longer, I am obliged to have recourse to them who do not. Your honour seems to have had some knowledge of me, possibly you may have been no stranger to this part of my character; if your honour has any demand upon me, you could not make it at a worse time." "You need not be afraid, Sir," said young Barker: "at the time I knew you, there was but little danger of any body's running in my debt; at present the case is altered; so if you will accept of this for old acquaintance sake, I

"pro-

"promise you before this company never to expect it of you again." Answer made a low bow. "Who you are, Sir," said he, "I am sure I shall not presume to inquire; it is sufficient for me that you are the most honourable gentleman I ever met with. If your honours will favour us with your company to-night, we will do our best to entertain you. We are to play the Orphan, and as it is for the benefit of our first actress, she and I are to dance a hornpipe after the second act, and I am to sing the Cries of London after the play." "Surely," said old Barker, "you don't suit your entertainments well to the solemnity of the play." "O, Sir," replied he, "Contrast, contrast is the beauty of a performance."

The company smiled, and promising to be at the theatre in the evening, adjourned to their tea.—Mrs. Barker was equally surprized and pleased to meet Mr. Norris, as, next to her husband, he was the man in the world for whom she had the greatest esteem: and old Mr. Barker could not help renewing his acknowledgments to him upon his expressing his joy at seeing his daughter, which was very great, for she had gained his esteem and veneration by the most engaging of all virtues, patient resignation under unmerited ill usage.

Sir Charles was not sorry to interrupt a conversation which was taking too tender a turn, by inquiring of Mr. Norris how things went on at the hall. "Why troth," replied he, "bad enough I believe for you, though well enough for me: because as you have a good house already, and I had a very bad one, I chose to make them cover mine in before they set about making any alterations in yours; by which means they are not so forward in your improvements as possibly you might expect: but as your's is chiefly inside work, they can go on with it in winter as well as in summer, so that every thing will be finished by the spring; which, from your late letters, is, I fancy, as soon as you will want to come down." Sir Charles sighed. "You then, Norris," said he, "are quite in order, and fit to receive any body who will do you the honour to come and sit down with you?" "Indeed I am," replied he, "and if you had not come down now, I do believe I should have asked somebody or other, for I really begin to be tired of living alone: if you don't marry soon, Sir Charles, I must absolutely marry in my own defence." "Apropos!" said Sir Charles, "you are going to be married, Norris; that is, you are very much in love, and

“ and I believe the lady has no great objection to you.” “ Indeed!” cried he, “ I am heartily glad to hear it. Pray who is this condescending lady? where did we meet? ” “ O,” said Sir Charles, “ you never have met yet: people of your consequence do all these things by proxy, and as I am agent for you both, it is hard if I cannot make you agree.” “ Why this is better and better,” replied Norris: “ to have a wife found out, courted, and all ready to one’s hands, is the cleverest thing in the world; only let me know before you fix the day, because this is absolutely the best coat I have to my back, and it begins to look dingy.” Sir Charles promised he would at least do that, and having by this time finished their tea, they adjourned to the play.

The company came in but slow, and the play was not likely to begin till at least an hour after the time mentioned in the bills; and as one blind fidler, who played two tunes and a bit, was not likely to afford them much amusement, Mr. J. Barker had a mind for a little more conversation with his friend the actor. He therefore dispatched the fidler’s boy to call Mr. Bond; Mr. Bond was dressing for *Chamont*; but as he had nothing more to do, than to shake a little flour into his hair, and tie a

black crape round the sleeve of his reddish coat by way of apology for black waistcoat and breeches, the wardrobe not allowing red ones, he soon appeared. The figure he made, considering him as *Chamont*, was ridiculous enough, for he was near forty years of age, very fat and awkward, which appearance, set off with a strong brogue in his pronunciation, agreed very ill with the idea of a polite gallant young officer. Young Barker took the liberty to tell him that he thought he might have played *Acasto* better. "Yes, Sir," said he, "but that part has been long in keeping by an old woman, who has belonged to the company many years, and who does not care to part with it." "A woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Barker. "Yes, Madam," replied he, "our company is but thin, and we are often obliged to put sex out of the question in casting our plays: last night I played Queen Elizabeth, and the old woman the Earl of Essex. If your ladyship pleases to look over this bill, you will find that we don't stand much upon such trifles." Mrs. Barker took the bill, and read as follows:

SIR CHARLES BEVILLE. 101

At the Theatre in Stoney-Stratford,

This present WEDNESDAY,

Will be performed a Concert of MUSIC.

Between the Acts of the Concert will be given,
gratis, a TRAGEDY, called

The O R P H A N,
OR THE

Unhappy Marriage.

Acasto by Mrs. BURTON.

Castalio by Mr. HARRIS.

Polydore by Miss ACKMAN.

Chamont by Mr. BOND

With the Cries of LONDON.

Chaplain by Mrs. FORD.

Page by Mr. HARRIS, Sen.

Serina by Mrs. JOHNSON.

And *Monimia* by Mrs. BOND.

With a Hornpipe.

To begin at Seven o'Clock, more or less.

“ Is your Lady, Sir, an actress in this Company?” said Mrs. Barker. “ Humph!”
“ No, Madam,” replied Mr. Bond; “ this is
“ a lady who chuses to conceal her own
“ name, and so does me the honour to go by
“ mine.”—By this time the *valet de theatre* had
lighted twelve of the fifteen tallow candles,
and the fidler had begun what was called the
last music, which indeed might as well have
been called the first, as he had continued to
torment his original two tunes and a bit without
intermission, from the time he began. And
now the curtain drew *on one side*, and Mr.
Bond took his leave, in order to perform the
part of prompter till he was wanted on the
stage: by which occupation he might be said
to be the principal performer, as he repeated
the whole of every part in so distinct and audible
a tone, that the performers on the stage
strutted his echoes; only Miss Ackman, in
Polydore, came after him an octave above,
which gave the effect of a man and his wife
singing ballads on each side of a street.—
Every thing went on smooth and well, till
Chamont was wanted on the stage: the office
of prompter being then transferred to the
candle-snuffer, it often happened that when
an actor was at a loss, which was the case
every other line, the unfortunate prompter

was

was more so; for though they repeated very ill, he read much worse. The effects this produced were very diverting, as the actors and prompter were frequently all at cross purposes through a whole scene. At last, Miss Ackman was quite out of patience, and finding that she could not go on by herself, and that the prompter could not assist her, she chose to act up to her assumed character, and catching hold of the poor prompter by the collar, she dragged him upon the stage, kicked him out on the other side, and snatching the book out of his hand, proceeded to read her part through with great composure.

Sir Charles and his company thought they had seen as good a scene as they should see, and so retired to their supper, which was by this time waiting for them.

CHAP. III.

Sir Charles arrives at the Hall, and finds his Neighbours under a great Mistake. A Comparison. The Mistake propagated. The Mistake rectified.

MR. J. Barker being the first who was stirring in the morning, entered into another conversation with his friend the actor, whom he found in the barn, tacking some white paper lace upon an old brown coat, and an older blue waistcoat; in which he was to play *Sir Novelty Fashion* the succeeding evening. He found him a very facetious fellow, and in the half hour's conversation which he had with him, till he was summoned to breakfast, he learned not only the player's own adventures, but those of his wife too; which, to say the truth, were the more extraordinary of the two, as she had been engaged in many scenes of life worth relating. Mr. Barker observed to him, that it was rather extraordinary that a man so well qualified to be her historian, should ever think of being her husband. "Alas! Sir," replied he, "I knew
" nothing of the worst of her pranks till very
" lately:

“ lately : when I married her, I thought she
 “ was nothing worse than a great man’s cast-
 “ off mistress.” “ What is become of her ?”
 said Mr. Barker. “ I really do not know,
 “ Sir,” replied he, “ and that is my misfor-
 “ tune ; for if I could but find her, and per-
 “ suade her to join the company, we should
 “ get money enough ; for she has so much im-
 “ pudence, and so good a command of her
 “ features, to say nothing of a special strong
 “ voice, as heaven knows, and I know, that
 “ I am convinced she would make a capital
 “ actress. But I fear she has too good
 “ friends.” “ Is that a thing to be feared ?”
 said Mr. Barker. “ Yes, Sir,” replied he,
 “ a man in general has no worse enemies
 “ than his wife’s friends, especially if she
 “ happens to be handsome.” Mr. Barker
 laughed, and telling him that he hoped he
 might find more friends, and his wife fewer,
 returned to his company.

The party arrived safe at the hall by dinner,
 amidst the acclamations of tenants, and ring-
 ing of bells. Never was a landlord more truly
 beloved in a parish than Sir Charles. He was
 therefore not at all surprized to find his neigh-
 bours and tenants collected to receive him
 with a cheerfulness in their looks arising from
 the pleasure of seeing their landlord and the
 hopes of a barrel of ale : but he found this

extraordinary concourse and glee arose from another cause. A confused rumour had been spread abroad that Sir Charles was going to be married, and one of the young farmers having seen the coach the evening before at Stratford, rode forward in a great hurry, and arriving at the blacksmith's shop, where several of the neighbours were assembled upon various occasions, reported that he had seen Sir Charles's coach at Stratford, with two gentlemen in it, and as fine a lady as ever the sun shone upon. "Ten to one it is his wife," said one. "Like enough," said a second. "Is Sir Charles married?" said a third. "Yes, and my lady is coming with him now," said a fourth. And so, as the business of getting a horse shod, a plough-share mended, a new link to a bucket, a scythe ground, or playing at quoits, makes the blacksmith's shop the general rendezvous of a parish in an evening, the affair was settled in an instant; and a resolution taken to ring the bells, and huzza Sir Charles and his bride down to the house; where they hoped to drink their healths, and wish them joy. They were a good deal disappointed at finding that their conjectures were ill-grounded; but upon the best part of their hopes being accomplished by the appearance of the ale, their disappointment began to wear off, and by the evening quite disappeared.—The mistake
afforded

afforded some diversion in the family, though they would have been glad to have had it end there. But unfortunately Mr. Poundem the apothecary happening to ride by the church just as the ringers were coming out of the belfry, he stopped his horse to ask what they had been ringing for, and was informed that Sir Charles Beville had brought his lady down. The mischief was done: it was as easy to stop the contents of a musquet after the trigger was pulled, as to stop the progress of a report when once Mr. Poundem had got hold of it. Sir Charles's good genius however did his best, by suggesting to Mr. Poundem that he ought to take the earliest opportunity of paying his respects to the new married couple; that possibly Lady Beville might some time or other have occasion for him; that now Sir Charles would probably reside more in the country, and with an increase of family, and that therefore he could not be too early in paying his compliments. In vain were all these suggestions, the pleasure of carrying the news first to Lord Timon's outweighed them all. And indeed with reason; for there was no part of his skill which brought him in so much custom as his abilities in news-carrying; for which reason he dealt more in news than in any other drug. He knew ten times more than any one else in the country; and he told

ten times more than he knew ; and it turned to excellent account. Agues and sore throats might find him employment in the spring and autumn ; but curiosity he found was an epidemical disease, which required his assistance all the year round. “ Doctor, what’s good for a fever ? ” was a question confined to a few ; but, “ Doctor, what news ? ” was in every one’s mouth ; and he took care accordingly to be at least as well qualified to answer the one as the other.—In general, whether in town or country, an apothecary in good practice is the archetype of his own great funnel. Whatever he receives from one vessel he delivers a little filtered into another ; and though he has little or nothing in himself, by frequent using he gets a smack and flavour as it were of whatever was poured through him last, and retains it till it is washed out by something else. They differ only in two respects ; first, that the funnel receives in large quantities, and pours out by degrees ; whereas the apothecary receives by degrees, and pours out by wholesale. Secondly, that the funnel can only pour out what it receives, and sometimes not so much ; whereas the apothecary pours out not only all that was poured in, but frequently a great deal more. These two circumstances being excepted, your apothecary is a funnel.—Our funnel arrived

rived at Lord Timon's just as the chaplain was saying grace.——“Name be praised.” “Amen Sir Charles Beville's married,” cried Funnel without stop or breath between.

By great ill luck for Sir Charles, and by as good for Poundem, there happened to be a great deal of company assembled at Lord Timon's; so that, “Is he?” “Is he really!” “Is he indeed!” issued from forty mouths.

Unfortunately for Funnel, “To whom?” succeeded from as many. Nothing with regard to this had been poured in; but, as something must come out, he could only say, “A lady from London:” which being far from satisfying the curiosity of any one present, each person determined to send a card of congratulation the next morning, in hopes of learning from the servants something about the new Lady Beville.

“I suppose she was a great fortune,” said an old lady with two handsome daughters, without much else to recommend them. “Or a great beauty,” said a young lady, whose eyes had got a trick of looking after each other. “Some young thing or other,” said Miss Autumn, with a toss of her head. All which observations translated into plain English, amounted to no more than——“I think Sir Charles might as well have had me.”

Sir

Sir Charles was all this time enjoying the innocent mistake of his neighbours, little suspecting that he should hear any more of it; but, in the morning, when he entered the breakfast room, he found Norris and young Barker enjoying themselves over several cards, which, so great was the impatience of some good ladies in the neighbourhood to hear who it was that Sir Charles had preferred to their daughters and nieces, had arrived before any body was stirring, with congratulations and how d'yes. Sir Charles could not help joining in the laugh, till he found them come thicker and faster, and then he began to think somebody or other had been very impertinent. However, he was sufficiently revenged upon the author of all this blunder, for, upon setting them all right, poor Poundem was so abused for a lying historian, that for the next month nobody put any more faith in him than in the Brussels Gazette.

CHAP. IV.

What passed at Sir Harry Clayton's after the arrival of Mrs. Stapleton.

WHILST Sir Charles is employed in feasting his tenants, and distributing his Christmas benefactions of coals, beef, bread, beer, great coats and flannel petticoats, to the poor people, we will just take a trip across the country, reader, and see what is going forward at Sir Harry Clayton's.

By the time Mrs. Stapleton arrived, the whole family had their grievances ready to lay before her: for, as she was the common friend of the family, every part of it flew to her for advice, or consolation, or pity, or congratulation, just as the case happened to be. When they had any thing to complain of against the rest of the world, which affected them jointly as a family, they generally came to her open-mouthed all together: but when, which was much oftener the case, they had any reason to complain of each other, they endeavoured separately to get her into corners, and each used every possible contrivance to in-

fluence her judgement in their favour. The present grievances were of this cast. Lady Clayton wanted to complain of Sir Harry ; Sir Harry of Sir Isaac ; Sir Isaac of Miss Clayton ; and Miss Clayton of every body. Mrs. Stapleton arrived about noon ; as soon therefore as she had been received and welcomed in form, she retired to dress for dinner of course. Miss Clayton attended her to her apartment, and by that means got the start : nor did she neglect her opportunity. “ O my dear Stapleton,” cried she before she had got her hand off the lock of the door, “ how have I been “ tormented since I saw you !” “ Probably,” replied Mrs. Stapleton, “ you don’t approve “ of Sir Isaac’s stile of making love.” “ Making love, my dear,” returned Miss Clayton, “ he makes nothing but faces : he is too “ proud to make love, and too insolent even “ to ask a favour : he seems to think no woman can have the assurance to refuse him ; “ and when he does vouchsafe to speak, it is “ only to set forth his own importance, and “ to make it appear how great an honour he “ does me in preferring me to so many ladies “ who would be ready to ask him if they “ dared. This is a language you know which “ young ladies are but little used to, and if I “ pluck up courage enough to tell him so, or
pretend

"pretend to demur a little upon the point,
 "the wretch flies into a fit of the fullens,
 "bounces away to my mother-in-law, says I
 "use him like a dog, won't speak a word all
 "the rest of the day; and then it must be
 "the work of the whole family to bring him
 "into temper again; and this is a lover, for-
 "sooth!" "I am most heartily glad of it."
 replied Mrs. Stapleton; "every thing goes on
 "just as I would wish. How does Sir Harry
 "like this method of making love?" "Why,
 "to say the truth," replied Miss Clayton,
 "he begins to be a little sick of his son-in-
 "law; for Sir Isaac and he have very fre-
 "quent and very long disputes about the ad-
 "vantages of family; in which Lady Clay-
 "ton is forced to moderate as well as she can,
 "or I verily believe it would have come to
 "a quarrel long ago. I ventured once or
 "twice to complain to my father of his be-
 "haviour, and he seemed to listen to me,
 "and even to have some thoughts of break-
 "ing with him; but unfortunately my lady
 "had the address, in their next conversation,
 "to suggest the probability of Sir Isaac's be-
 "ing prevailed on to purchase a barony,
 "which undid in an instant all that I had
 "been labouring at for several days."
 "That was a fetch," said Mrs. Stapleton,
 "rather

“rather above the usual contrivance of her
“ladyship; but I think we may be able to
“over-rule that.” “O my dear Stapleton,”
said Miss Clayton, “all my hopes of comfort
“are in you.” “Well, well,” replied she,
“don’t be discouraged; every thing must go
“as we would have it; in the mean time
“there is something to keep up your spirits.”
“A letter!” cried Miss Clayton. “Cruel
“Mrs. Stapleton, not to give it me in all this
“time!” Mrs. Stapleton left her friend to
enjoy her letter by herself, and going down
stairs, she found Sir Harry walking in the hall,
ready to catch her before she could reach the
drawing-room.

“My dear Mrs. Stapleton,” cried he,
“you find a very distracted family here; I
“am sorry to find your friend Harriet so set
“against a match which Lady Clayton and
“I have so much at heart for her, and which
“I believe indeed is as good a one as she
“can expect. We must be obliged to you
“for your mediation in this affair; she will
“listen to you more than to any body, I
“know, and—” “I am rather surprized,”
“Sir Harry,” interrupted Mrs. Stapleton,
“to find that you are so warmly attached to
“Sir Isaac Rupce. I was aware of Lady
“Clayton’s partiality to him; but I should
“think,

"think, if you consider the rank which your daughter has a right to expect to marry into," (Sir Harry hemmed, and held up his head) "and compare it with Sir Isaac's, you would not be so eager to promote the alliance: his father, Sir, I am informed, was but a ticket-porter." Sir Harry turned pale, and took three steps backwards. "A ticket-porter!—" "Gracious heaven!" exclaimed he, "a ticket porter!—" "Come, come, Sir Harry," said Mrs. Stapleton, "you and I must have a long conversation upon this subject. I have too great a regard for your happiness and Harriet's, as well as for the honour of your family, to see you surrounded with uncles and cousins in chairmen's great-coats and leather aprons, without shewing you the danger, at least." Lady Clayton that instant appearing at the head of the stairs, Sir Harry squeezed Mrs. Stapleton's hand, and muttering "a ticket porter!" followed her into the drawing-room. Sir Isaac was already there. Sir Harry made a slight bow, and flinging himself into a chair opposite to Sir Isaac, who was reading a news-paper, eyed him from head to foot: the idea of a ticket-porter stuck to every part of him, and uglier him all over. He read a paragraph to the company about some change in the administration,

tration, and gave his opinion that it was probably true. Sir Harry contradicted him flat. How should a ticket-porter, thought he, know any thing of court-business. Miss Clayton entered the room, and Sir Isaac, with rather more shew of gallantry than he was usually guilty of, in order to appear well in the eyes of Mrs. Stapleton, advanced a few steps, and taking her hand, told her she looked charmingly. Sir Harry reddened. "Pray, Miss Clayton," said he, "do me the favour to "fetch my spectacles out of the next room." What has a ticket-porter, thought he, to do with my daughter's hand. In short, whichever way he viewed him, *en face, en profile, au devant, au derriere*, still the idea of a ticket-porter stuck to him, and uglified him all over. He did not say a thing all day that Sir Harry did not contradict: he praised the soup at dinner; diabolical soup, thought Sir Harry, but good enough for ticket-porters. He complained it was cold; Sir Harry unbuttoned another button of his waistcoat; thy knot, honest man, thought he, and a good load, would warm thee. Sir Harry asked for his toast, he gave a lady of the bed-chamber: Sir Harry blushed; the Queen's head at a gin-shop was the idea that struck him. In short, whatever he said or did, Sir Harry tacked the knot

knot and white apron to it, and treated it accordingly. Mrs. Stapleton, who was the only person who had any notion of what passed in Sir Harry's mind, watched every turn of his countenance, and was rejoiced to find the dose which she had given him operate as she would have it. After the cloth had been removed the usual time, the ladies made a motion to retire; but Sir Harry, foreseeing how much he should be distressed to keep his temper in a tête-à-tête with Sir Isaac, opposed it with so much earnestness, that they were forced to comply. Lady Clayton indeed was not very difficult to persuade; for, without knowing Sir Harry's fresh cause of disgust, she knew their tempers and dispositions to be so opposite, except that pride and petulance had a pretty large share in the composition of both, that she dreaded a quarrel every time they were left by themselves. Mrs. Stapleton and Miss Clayton, who had not the same reasons for dreading a rupture between them as Lady Clayton had, would have been glad to have given them every opportunity; but as Mrs. Stapleton had many other incendiary anecdotes to communicate to Sir Harry, she thought it might be as well to let things rest till she had thoroughly loaded him with intelligence, that the explosion, when it happened, might

might be the more violent and effectual.—Never was an appearance of civility and good-humour kept up with more difficulty on all sides, than it was that evening: and had it not been for the relief which a pool at quadrille afforded them, I know not whether they would have been able to carry it through. As it was, the coldness, frequently approaching very near to rudeness, with which Sir Harry treated Sir Isaac, could not pass unnoticed even by Lady Clayton, though not the most penetrating person in the world. Nor was Sir Isaac himself without some suspicions. It was not therefore till after Mrs. Stapleton had five times looked at her watch, and ten times complained of being fatigued with her journey, that Lady Clayton would consent to retiring to rest. At last however, upon Mrs. Stapleton's ringing for her servant, she was obliged to comply, and leave the gentlemen to themselves. She need not have been afraid; they were neither of them in a humour for sitting long. Sir Harry was afraid of his own temper: Sir Isaac was afraid of something, he could not precisely say what, and in a few minutes after the ladies were gone, he rang for his servant, and wished Sir Harry a good night. Sir Harry with much coolness returned the compliment, and as soon as his back was turned, he shook
his

his head; resumed his chair, and sat with his eyes fixed upon the fire; in which attitude he continued in what is called a brown study, till Lady Clayton's bell rang, when he started from his reverie, and muttering "A ticket porter!" obeyed the summons. "Pray, Sir Harry," said Lady Clayton, as he entered the room, "what has been the matter between Sir Isaac and you?" "Nothing," replied he. "I am sure," said she, "he has done something to offend you, for I never know'd you so rude in my whole life, as you have been to him to-night." "He never offended me," said Sir Harry, "'twas his father." "His father," replied she, "why did you know his father?" "No, nor he neither, most probably," cried Sir Harry. "Come, come," said she, "you have got some foolish crotchet in your head now."—"I believe I have," returned he, "for, as Squire Sullen says, it aches consumedly, and so I wish you a good night, Madam."

Lady Clayton found there was nothing to be learned from him in the temper he was in, so had recourse to her pillow, and her own conjectures, to help her to the cause of the quarrel; but with as little success. If her pillow however did not help her to the knowledge

ledge which she wanted, it helped her to a comfortable nap; in which she had the advantage of Sir Harry, who, whenever he attempted to close his eyes, was so haunted with porters, chairmen, hackney-coachmen, and all the *canaille* of Fleet-ditch, that he got not a wink of sleep that night.—His daughter, whose rest had been disturbed also, though by a spectre of a more agreeable kind, was in the breakfast-room as early as himself the next morning; she happened indeed to be there first, and, not unluckily for her, was engaged when he entered in reading Collins's Peerage, which together with the Court Kalendar, always lay in the window. "Don't let me disturb you, my dear," said he, seeing her going to lay down the book, "I love to see young women usefully employed. You will find there many of your illustrious ancestors, which, by the help of the table I have drawn up at the end, you may trace with their collaterals down to your grand-mother, who was a Scroop." "Yes, Sir," replied Miss Clayton, "I see her father was brother to Lord——, and was groom-porter to George the First." The circumstance was fortunate; it called up all the blood in Sir Harry's body into his face. "He was, Miss," said he with an emotion, the cause of which she

she could not comprehend ; “ and shall the
 “ blood of the Scroops and Claytons, which
 “ has ran pure and unmixed through the veins
 “ of lords of the bed-chamber, vice-cham-
 “ berlains, grooms of the bed-chamber, mas-
 “ ters of the ceremonies, and groom-porters,
 “ be contaminated with a filthy mixture of
 “ that puddle which animates ticket-porters
 “ and fish-women ? Forbid it, heaven ! ” Miss
 Clayton was astonished. Mrs. Stapleton
 coming in at that instant, “ Step up, my
 “ dear,” said Sir Harry to Miss Clayton,
 “ to Lady Clayton, and ask her if she is
 “ ready for breakfast, for I am obliged to go
 “ to Lord L.’s this morning, and I shall be
 “ too late.” “ O, my dear Mrs. Stapleton,”
 continued he, “ what you told me yesterday
 “ of this Sir Isaac’s descent, has disturbed me
 “ beyond measure ; I have not had a wink of
 “ sleep since I saw you. I cannot tell how I
 “ shall keep my temper with the wretch, and
 “ yet I don’t know how to get rid of him
 “ neither.” “ I hope, Sir,” said Mrs. Sta-
 pleton, “ you have not given him your abso-
 “ lute promise that he shall be your son-in-
 “ law.” “ Why,” returned he, “ I must
 “ acknowledge Lady Clayton did draw me in
 “ to make some such promise ; but then Har-
 “ riet being of age, I could not absolutely
 VOL. II. G “ engage

“engage to make her marry him; and I have
“no other hope than in her obstinacy; for
“to be sure Lady Clayton and myself are
“both bound to give him all the assistance in
“our power; but if she will be obstinate, you
“know——” “O,” cried Mrs. Stapleton,
“if that be all that is wanting, I think I
“can engage for her obstinacy; for really,
“Sir Harry, you cannot imagine what a jest
“it would be to all your relations, and in-
“deed to all the world, to see your daughter,
“Sir Harry Clayton’s daughter, married to
“a man whose father was a porter, and
“whose brother is at this time a cheese-mon-
“ger in Tooley-Street. Think of that, Sir,
“think of your daughter in white and silver,
“with a crane-necked chariot, and long-
“tailed horses, setting out to visit her sister
“in Tooley-Street.” “You petrify me,
“Madam,” cried Sir Harry. “O my dear
“Sir,” cried she, “that is nothing; he has
“a sister; whose husband keeps a sloop-shop in
“Crutched-Friars, and who actually stands
“behind the counter herself, serving sailors
“with check shirts, hammocks, and jackets
“and trowsers.” “Mercy upon me!” cried
Sir Harry, “Mercy upon me! what an
“escape have I had! I will break with him
“this instant: an impudent scoundrel, to
“have

“ have the assurance to think of dragging my
 “ Harriet to play at Pope Joan, and Com-
 “ merce, in Tooley-Street and Crutched-
 “ Friars !” “ Softly, Sir Harry,” said Mrs.
 Stapleton, “ give me leave to advise you to
 “ go a little coolly to work : he at present
 “ has the good opinion of Lady Clayton, and
 “ I think it may be as well not to exasperate
 “ her too much by a sudden quarrel ; be so
 “ good as to talk a little with her ladyship ;
 “ in the mean time let matters rest ; Sir Isaac,
 “ when he finds your behaviour to him more
 “ cool than usual, will suspect that his com-
 “ pany is not very agreeable here, and possibly
 “ his pride may take the alarm, and make him
 “ quit his pretensions of his own accord, and
 “ that will save you a great deal of trouble.”
 “ My dear Madam,” cried Sir Harry, “ I
 “ am bound to you for ever ; let me but get rid
 “ of this wretch, and I don’t care if the girl
 “ has not another offer this twelvemonth.”

The rest of the company entering at this minute, broke off the conversation. Whether Sir Isaac had overheard any part of it, or whether he had discovered any thing particular in Sir Harry’s behaviour, I cannot tell, but he sat swelling in very ill humour, during the time of breakfast, and hardly vouchsafed an answer to all the civil things which Lady

Clayton said to him to make amends for the coolness of the rest of the company; which was, to say the truth, pretty conspicuous. Sir Harry however told him, that he was going to make a morning visit to Lord L. and asked if he would favour him with his company; to which he replied, "No, Sir, I have letters to write of more consequence to me than dangling after lords." After breakfast Sir Harry went to make his visit, Sir Isaac to write his letters, and the ladies were left to muslin and catgut; which produced the conversation to be found in the next chapter.



CHAP. V.

A Conversation Piece.

Mrs. Stapleton. — “**D**ANGLING after lords! —” What airs of importance these purse-proud, new-made gentry give themselves! I dare say that man thinks his money sets him above every person in the world who has not so much.

Lady Clayton. Vy really I think money is the most useful thing, and so the most honourable; but it makes some folks prouder than othersome. Laud! Miss Clayton, have not you done that poor apron yet? But you read so much, it is no vonder your work goes on so slow. If you and Sir Isaac come together, you’ll read for him and yourself too, for he says he never reads any thing but the papers.

Miss Clayton. I question, Madam, whether he can read any thing else.

Lady Clayton. Vy I suppose, Miss, if he can read them, he can read any thing; for there’s as hard reading in the news-papers as any vere.

Mrs. Stap. (*siffling a laugh.*) Harriet, lend me a needle. You should not undervalue Sir Isaac's education, child; he was brought up at St. Bride's charity-school, and could read and write and cast accompts before Sir Francis Tradewell, the India-director, took him.

Lady Clay. Sir Isaac brought up at a charity school!

Mrs. Stap. Yes, Madam, and a very good education too for a younger son, considering his father could not earn above twelve or fourteen shillings a week.

Lady Clay. Vy, vat vas his father?

Mrs. Stap. A porter, Madam.—Harriet, will your thimble fit me?

Miss Clay. A porter!—A porter!

Lady Clay. Vy then as sure as you are alive that vas vat Sir Harry meant last night, ven he said he vas'nt offended with him, but his father. Vell, 'tis no matter, he has money enough now, and may be a lord ven he likes. Pray, Miss, lend me your thread-paper.—Your thread-paper, I said, Miss, not your hufwife: you don't know vat you're about.

Miss Clay. I beg your ladyship's pardon, I was thinking of Sir Isaac in a band, and a brown cap, with an orange coloured ribbon.

Lady

Lady Clay. No matter vat he vas, Miss; vat he is, is the question.

Mrs. Stap. Why, as your ladyship says, it is so; and yet spiteful people will be apt to remember, especially when there happens to be a good parcel of poor relations to put them in mind. By the way, Harriet, you will find your dislike to cheese a monstrous inconvenience, for I question whether your sister in Tooley-Street has any way into her house but through the shop.

Lady Clay. } For goodness sake, what do
Miss Clay. } you mean?

Mrs. Stap. Ha! ha! ha! Why did not your ladyship know, that Sir Isaac has a brother a cheese-monger in Tooley-Street? Indeed he has, and four or five great nephews at St. Paul's school, who in a year or two will be bound apprentices to grocers, tallow-chandlers, and oil-men. I hope, Harriet, you'll deal all amongst your relations.

Miss Clay. These are the connections your ladyship has picked out for me.

Lady Clay. I protest I never heard of this before. I cannot say as I like poor relations, because they must be maintained for one's own credit; but one family is not so much.

Mrs. Stap. O, dear Madam, this brother's family would be nothing as to the matter of

maintaining, because I hear they are in very good circumstances. But there is a sister married to a man who keeps a sloop-shop in Crutched-Friars, with a family five times as large as the cheese-monger's, who I am informed can hardly live. Poor things ! Harriet, you won't let your nephews and nieces come to the parish.

Miss Clayton. And does Sir Isaac do nothing for them ?

Mrs. Stapleton. Not that ever I heard. O my dear Harriet ! possibly you may not have observed, that when once the idea of money has got possession of a man's soul, he is from that instant deaf to every call of generosity, liberality, or even humanity : shut up in himself, he never bestows a thought on the rest of mankind ; I never, says he, meddle with other people's concerns. Talk to such a man of social endearments, sentimental enjoyments, and the happiness arising from the finer and more exquisite feelings of the soul, and your language will be as absolutely unintelligible to him, as if you spoke Arabic. Don't you remember what *La Bruiere* says ? *Un bon financier ne pleure ni ses amis, ni sa femme, ni ses enfans.* Talk to him, again, of the pleasures arising from music, painting, poetry, or any of the polite arts ; of the satisfaction arising from

from works of genius and imagination, he shakes his head, and calls it all loss of time, and hindrance of business. Homer and Virgil were, in his opinion, infinitely below Cocker and Wingate, and the only valuable thing ever imported from Italy, was the Italian method of book-keeping.

Miss Clayton. O my dear Stapleton, what a character have you drawn! and can your ladyship think that any advantage can be an equivalent for passing one's life with such a man?

Lady Clay. Vy really, Miss, if, as Mrs. Stapleton says, he has such a number of poor relations, I don't see as one shall be much the better for his money.

Mrs. Stap. I would not be impertinent, Madam, nor wish to interfere in the affairs of your family farther than I have your ladyship's permission to do; but the regard I have for all parts of it, will not suffer me to be silent upon this head. You cannot imagine, Madam, the number of inconveniences such an alliance would bring upon you. Your ladyship's family has always been upon a very respectable footing in the world.

Lady Clay. Yes, thank G—d, I never was plagued with a poor relation as I know of.

Mrs. Stap. — Sir Harry is on all sides nobly allied; think then, Madam, what a triumph it would be to your enemies, if you have any, and what a mortification to your friends, to hear, on all sides, of your daughter's relations, her brothers waiting in the halls of people who would otherwise be ashamed of taking place of her, in any assembly in town; whilst her nephews are running about the town in brown sleeves, and leather aprons. How would your ladyship like to hear any one say, "I don't know how rich or how fine Lady Rupee may be; but I know her brother sells me horrid Cheshire-cheese, for which I shall give the rascal a good talk the next time I meet him."

Lady Clay. Vy to be sure one is apt to talk in that way of one's tradesfolks; and yet trade is a very good thing.

Mrs. Stap. And tradesfolks are very good people, Madam; only let them keep in their own places; particularly the lower cla's. If Sir Isaac's brother was an opulent merchant, it would be another case; I don't know a more useful or a more respectable character.

Lady Clay. No sure!

Mrs. Stapleton. — But really a cheese-monger, and a slop-shop, and forty other little trades

trades besides, are not a proper stile of life for your daughter to be thrown into.

Lady Clay. Indeed I did not think he had been so low ; but Sir Harry is always so fond of lords and dukes, and I cannot tell vat, who are generally as poor as Job, that I thought it would be better for Miss Clayton to have a husband who could lend money, rather than one who would want to borrow it, and that was all my reason for encouraging Sir Isaac.

Mrs. Stap. Your ladyship shewed much prudence in your opinion ; but I dare say you will agree with me, that gold may be bought too dear, and that our Harriet may meet with a match with which prudence may be very well satisfied, without sacrificing every other consideration to a regard for money.

Miss Clay. Believe me, Madam, I never will listen to any proposal which my father or your ladyship shall think imprudent, only let me be delivered from this wretch, who is my aversion.

Lady Clay. I am sure, Miss Clayton, I am far from wishing you to accept of any man who would be an improper husband for you ; much less should I wish to see you surrounded with poor relations in leather aprons, as Mrs. Stapleton says : and now there is no danger of your having that foolish

lord that your papa was so fond of, with whom by the bye you might have had plenty of poor relations without leather-aprons, I have no particular desire for your having Sir Isaac; but then you must get rid of him yourself, for your papa and I have promised to prevail upon you to have him; but if you won't, you know—

Miss Clay. O, Madam, if that is all, I shall very soon be able to get rid of him, without troubling your ladyship or my father for any thing but your permission to refuse ever listening to him again.

Sir Isaac just at that instant calling under the window, to know if the ladies would not take a little walk before they went to dress, put an end to the conversation: the conclusion of which gave the most sensible pleasure to Miss Clayton and her friend.

C H A P. VI.

A Walk. A fair Riddance.

THE sun happening to shine remarkably warm for the season, the ladies condescended to take a walk with Sir Isaac, as far as the end of the avenue; but the incendiary Stapleton had, by this time, so effectually done her business with the whole family, that even Lady Clayton could hardly bring herself to behave tolerably civil to him. During the walk, therefore, the seemingly studied neglect with which they all treated him, would have piqued a less proud man than Sir Isaac. They tittered, they whispered, they talked French, they winked, they nodded, and, in short, behaved with so much indifference, not to say rudeness, that he must have had less penetration than even he had, not to have seen that it was all premeditated, and that the whole family was in a league against him. By the time they got to the end of the avenue, which extended near a mile from the house, Sir Harry was returning from his visit. As soon as he saw them, he got out of the chariot and joined them.

Sir Isaac having made several unsuccessful efforts to join in the conversation, and having hazarded

hazarded several ingenious remarks upon the country, the weather, and the wind, without being so fortunate as to procure one answer, had that moment taken a resolution to shut his luckless mouth for the remainder of the walk ; but the arrival of Sir Harry, whose habitual politeness generally got the better of his disgusts, prevented his putting it in practice.— To behave with equal politeness to those he esteems and those he despises, is the part which a courtier spends his youth in learning, and all the rest of his life in performing. Sir Harry had long been master of his part, and when the first gust of passion or resentment was over, performed it to admiration. Overnight, he had been thoroughly provoked at the insolence of Sir Isaac, who, knowing his own obscurity, should have the presumption to think of introducing himself into his family ; and for a few hours his indignation threw him off his guard, and his real character got the better of his assumed one. But in his way to Lord L.'s, he had had time to recollect himself, and having had an opportunity whilst he was there of observing the extreme complaisance with which his lordship treated a person who happened to be with him, for whom Sir Harry knew he had the most absolute contempt, he presently recovered his cue, and, by the time he joined the company at his
return,

return, was prepared to go on with his part, with that true spirit of which his patron Lord L. had just given him a pattern; which consists in borrowing the language of friendship and affection, without troubling one's self with any other part of them, and by that means appearing outwardly what one should be within. This is an *etiquette*, without which a man cannot pass in the world, and which is for ever leading men who have but little knowledge of the world into mistakes.

"My dear Sir Isaac," said Sir Harry, "Lord L. was extremely sorry you would not do him the honour to call upon him; he would have been very happy to have seen you, and I should have been no less so, in introducing you to him."—His name had never once been mentioned, indeed it would have cost Sir Harry a blush, if he had imagined his lordship could suspect he had the son of a ticket-porter in his house; but it was a civil thing, and so he said it. Sir Isaac, who was a matter-of-fact man, who never told a lie himself, but when there was something to be got by it, and had but very little knowledge of the refinements of good breeding, his own breeding extending not an inch farther than civility, and sometimes falling short even of that, was a little surprized at Sir Harry's cordiality, for he had been tho-
I
roughly

roughly convinced over-night, that he was well inclined to quarrel with him : not being, therefore, in the court-secret, he took all this civility for genuine friendship, and concluded he had been mistaken. His countenance cleared up in an instant, and giving a side glance at Miss Clayton, as much as to say, " I'll tell your papa of you, Miss," he put his arm within Sir Harry's, and, enquiring what news he brought from Lord L.'s, they proceeded towards the house with the greatest cordiality imaginable. When they got into the garden, the ladies went in to dress, and the gentlemen took a turn or two upon the bowling green before the door. Then it was that Sir Isaac began to open his mind, and to make his complaint to Sir Harry of the ill-usage he had received from his wife and daughter, not without many severe reflections upon the meddling disposition of Mrs. Stapleton, to whom he was not such a fool but he could easily perceive he was indebted to the great change in the behaviour of Lady Clayton, (for, to say the truth, Miss Clayton had long before used him as ill as she knew how to do) within the short time elapsed since her arrival. He fully expected that Sir Harry would, at least, be extremely shocked, and sorry, promise to set matters upon the best footing he could, and, whatever he might be able to do

do with regard to his lady, would engage at least that his daughter should behave with more respect to him. According, indeed, to his notions of Sir Harry's sentiments in his favour, he had a right to expect all this, if not more: he was therefore not a little surprised to find him hum! and ha! and, in short, hesitate a long time before he gave him an answer at all. Little did he suspect that Sir Harry was all this time endeavouring to reconcile his sincerity to his breeding, and studying how to turn him out of his house in the civillest manner. It was not to be done very civilly, so he was forced for once to lay his good-breeding a little on one side, which he was very loth to do: but the idea of his father's knot, and white apron, happening to come across him just at that instant, enabled him to tell him at length, "that he was very sorry if any thing in his house had given him offence, but if that was the case, he knew how to go where he should be more agreeably entertained."—You have seen, reader—But what signifies what you have seen? Sir Isaac's astonishment was like nothing you ever could see. It was that kind of dumb-founding astonishment which makes a man examine, in silence, his astonisher from top to toe; then turn his head first on this side, then on that, as if looking for somebody to

to help him to wonder. Sir Harry had now pretty well got over his scruples; so taking advantage of the silence into which he had astonished Sir Isaac, he proceeded. "Look'ye, " Sir Isaac," said he, "I should be very sorry " to behave ill to any *gentleman*," (he laid a particular emphasis on that word) "under " my own roof; but it is the first time the " breeding of my family" (the blood of the Claytons began to rise) "was ever called in " question. If Miss Clayton has any dislike to you, I make no doubt but ~~she~~ has " her reasons: possibly I may have my own " for not entertaining so good an opinion of " you as I once did: Lady Clayton may have " the same."

"Sir—Sir!" spluttered Sir Isaac, "I " beg—I desire you would explain yourself. " Sir, I know how to treat any body who calls " my character in question."

Sir Harry was a very peaceable man.— "I want not, Sir Isaac," said he, "to " quarrel with you, or any man: I once, " perhaps, thought an alliance with you " might have been an eligible thing, and " wished, I acknowledge, to persuade my " daughter to think so too; but, Sir, she is " not to be prevailed on; you see you cannot " prevail on her yourself; nor can I: let

"us

“ us therefore part friends, as we met, and
 “ may you find a family more proper for
 “ your alliance than mine is !” “ With all my
 “ heart, Sir,” cried Sir Isaac. “ Hoh ! with all
 “ my heart ; but—Sam !—but may I be—Sam !
 “ may I be—get my chaise directly—be d—n—
 “ ed.” “ Don’t be warm, Sir Isaac,” said Sir
 Harry mildly,—“ nor in a hurry ; let us dine
 “ together, and part civilly, however.” “ Rot
 “ me if I do though,” cried he ; and in spite
 of all that Sir Harry could say, he hurried up
 to his room, and never ceased cursing his ser-
 vants, the whole family and himself, till he
 had got his wardrobe tumbled into his chaise-
 seat, and then flinging himself into one corner
 of the chaise, without taking the least notice
 of any one of the family, he drove off, never
 more to appear at Beechwood-Park. The la-
 dies, who had the curiosity to listen to the
 whole proceeding, were highly delighted with
 the event ; and Mrs. Stapleton sat down to
 write an account of the whole proceeding to
 Sir Charles Beville.

As, therefore, reader, it is high time for us
 to be travelling that way, if you please we will
 carry the letter.

CHAP. VII.

Various Remarks on Visiting, and other Matters.

—“ I NEVER call upon any body in my ride,” said Mr. Norris. “ I know nothing upon earth so insipidly impertinent as that kind of call :—generally speaking, a visiter in that way neither entertains the person he calls on, nor suffers him to entertain himself.

“ I frequently am favoured with a call by one or other of my neighbours ; as soon as he comes in, I shut up my book, or lay down my pen ; he sits down, I twist my thumbs, and he tells me something of the weather, which leads us into telling each other forty things, which we both knew before, and which it did not signify a farthing whether either of us ever knew ; asking forty questions, without caring a pin for the answers, and abusing forty folks for things which we know nothing about.

“ In this way he murders my whole morning, and because he has nothing to do, is
“ deter-

“determined I shall not do any thing.”
 “Possibly,” said young Barker, “your
 “neighbours think you are an idle man
 “without any business, and so come to amuse
 “you, for fear your time should hang heavy
 “upon your hands.” “That,” cried old
 Mr. Barker, “is one of the greatest mis-
 “takes that can be; to imagine, that be-
 “cause a man has none of those matters upon
 “his hands, which the world pleases to call
 “business, that therefore he must be an idle
 “man. It requires so great a fund of know-
 “ledge to be able to fill up one’s time with-
 “out the affairs of the world, that I think
 “the employments of the studious ought to
 “have a better name; and that reading, writ-
 “ing, and thinking, have just as good a right
 “to be called business, as casting up accounts,
 “and engrossing title-deeds.”

“Very true,” said Norris, “and I don’t see
 “why I am to be broken in upon in the
 “middle of an interesting page, and be hur-
 “ried out of the pleasing enthusiasm, the
 “sentimental delusion, in which I am in-
 “dulging my mind, into the insipid obser-
 “vations upon wind and weather, with
 “which an impertinent visiter pleases to en-
 “tertain me, any more than I should be in-
 “terrupted in drawing up a brief, or making
 “a

“ a bargain.” “ Possibly then,” said Mrs. Barker, “ you are an advocate for the London custom, of denying one’s self.” “ Why,” replied he, “ in general, I hate a lie as bad as treason ; but, as nobody intends to be believed, or to mean any thing more than that they are engaged, or not at leisure, it becomes no lie, and therefore, as it is no sin, and very convenient, I wish the custom was adopted in the country. In short, London, is the land in which it is pretty generally true, that whoever has no business, is an idle person, and of course, it is the land of visits ; and with all my heart : if you can be contented to go out in the evening with no other view, but to return at night, perfectly satisfied with having in four or five hours tired a pair of coach-horses, wetted two servants to the skin, seen ten or twelve footmen, one lady whom you hardly know by sight, and another whom you don’t care six-pence whether you ever see again, and then think you lead a life of pleasure, why I am very well satisfied too ; only I don’t love pleasure.” “ I fancy, Mrs. Barker,” said Sir Charles, “ you think Norris a very unsociable man.” “ I don’t know that,” replied she ; “ people who like any society better than none, are, in general, those
“ who

“ who know least how to enjoy it.” There
 “ is no man,” said Norris, “ loves society
 “ more than I do; but then let it be so-
 “ ciety. Let me enjoy a family fire-side,
 “ a party of friends connected with one
 “ another by the same pursuits and enjoy-
 “ ments; or, if that cannot always be the
 “ case, let us meet however to do some-
 “ thing more than talk of the weather: let
 “ the object be what it will, music, cards,
 “ dancing, push-pin if you will, only let
 “ there be an object, if it be only to keep
 “ us from saying the same thing over again.”
 “ And so,” said Sir Charles, “ if you cannot
 “ always have the kind of society you chuse,
 “ you will shut yourself up in **your** study-
 “ by yourself from one year’s end to the
 “ other?”

“ Why, troth,” replied Norris, “ for a
 “ man of a social turn of mind, as I
 “ tell you, and you know I am, that is
 “ a bad expedient, and indeed what I am
 “ very near sick of, for which reason, if I
 “ could meet with a woman who came
 “ within a bar’s length of my way of
 “ thinking, I would not stand for trifles;
 “ I should certainly marry, and form a *coterie*
 “ for myself.”

“ I do

“ I do really think,” said Sir Charles, “ that of all the women I ever saw, the lady I have picked out for you comes the nearest to the mark.” “ I am glad of it, with all my heart,” cried Norris, “ because then I am in love with her already ; which otherwise would have been a difficult matter to have brought about.”

“ Are you difficult to please ?” said Mrs. Barker. “ No, Madam,” replied he, “ but I have been in love without marrying, and therefore I took it for granted, I should marry without being in love ; but Sir Charles says not.” “ I’ll shew you a letter,” said Sir Charles, “ which I have this minute received from her, and if you are not in love with her then, you are a stock or a stone.”

He accordingly gave him the letter which he had received from Mrs. Stapleton, which was written with all that life and spirit which were natural to her, and had a certain mixture of those sensible remarks which speak observation and discernment. He read the letter with the most exquisite delight. “ O,” cried he, “ how charming it is to find, in the same person, the charms of a woman mixed with the sense and ingenuity

"genuity of a man! She has all the merit
"of both sexes."

"I thought," said Mrs. Barker, "you
"great scholars had despised a learned
"lady?" "I don't know," replied Norris,
"what great scholars may do; I am sure I
"do not. I care not how much a woman
"knows, only let her not pretend to know
"more than she does. I never heard of any
"law which restrained ladies from making
"use of their eyes, from reading, or
"remembering what they read. If a woman
"has a good understanding, she will be able
"to improve it, or, if you will, become
"learned; if she has not, she never can ac-
"quire any learning: she may affect to ap-
"pear learned indeed, and then she will be-
"come justly ridiculous. But I will engage
"for Mrs. Stapleton's knowing too much,
"to affect more knowledge than she really
"has; and I can see by this letter, that she
"never says so much upon a subject, but
"she could say a great deal more if she
"pleased." "I have a great mind, Norris,"
said Sir Charles, "to make you answer that
"letter; you find she mentions you in two
"or three places of it, and supposes that you
"will see it: therefore, as you are so well
"acquainted with each other by hearsay, I
Vol. II. H "have

“ have an inclination to set you together.”
“ With all my heart,” said Norris : “ I would
“ not desire any better amusement whilst you
“ good folks are gone to dress.”

Accordingly he went into the library,
and when they met in the drawing-room again
before dinner, produced the letter which the
reader will find in the next chapter.



C H A P. VIII.

Mr. Norris's Letter. The Reader is introduced into good Company.

NEVER, Madam, did any man's curiosity triumph over his discretion, as mine has this instant done.

Sir Charles, vain wretch that he is, could not conceal his being honoured with a letter from you ; I, indiscreet wretch that I am, could not suppress my desire to see it. Who, that has heard as much of you as I have, could ? On one condition I was to be indulged ; name it, cried I, seizing the letter, and reading it with the eagerness it deserved. Answer it, said he. My hair stood an end ; but what could I do ? I had passed my word, so he is accountable for all the impertinence of this.—Neither is this the only instance I fear, Madam, in which I shall suffer for my curiosity. I never had less inclination for falling in love than at this instant ; but really your letter is a very distressing circumstance. I have long said that I would surrender at discretion, whenever I found a lady who was ca-

pable of thinking, talking, or writing in such a manner as should correspond with a certain idea which I had formed in my mind: alas! your letter must have been, however you came by it, written from that copy. I have nothing therefore, Madam, to do, but to make you an offer of my heart, whenever you are ready to receive it. All my comfort is, that possibly you may not be at leisure to be loved just now; you may probably be so taken up with a croud of other adorers, that my affections may find some more convenient time of offering themselves to your service. I shall therefore keep my heart, if I can, till you may have occasion for it: perhaps, some time or other, you may have occasion to make some haughty lover jealous, by the appearance of a new slave never heard of before; or may have an inclination to out-number some young beauty just come out, and may have occasion for me to swell your train: whenever any thing of this kind happens, be so good as remember you have a lover in reserve, who only waits for your signal to begin loving you, just as violently as you shall think proper to command him. Sir Charles, heaven be praised, proposes setting out for London next week, by which time you, Madam, will probably be arrived, and I shall have the happiness

ness of seeing to whom I have promised to pay suit and service.

I know not whether I have done well thus to declare myself your lover before-hand; for, according to the custom of the ladies, it will possibly deprive me of those little marks of attention and favour, which a lady bestows on every man but a lover. Nay, I am not sure whether you may not think treating me ill, the best signal you can give me for beginning to love you, as the world always take it for granted, when they see a lady use a man worse than ordinary, that he has ventured to declare he loves her, and so put himself in her power. But permit me to give you one hint; though using me a little ill, may be only an indication to the world that I have the honour to love you, it is possible for you to use me so very ill, as to make them believe that you do me the honour to love me. As therefore that is a secret which I should think you would not chuse to trust the world with, I have the greatest dependance, both upon your generosity and discretion, that you will not make too rigid a use of the advantage I have given you over me, by assuring you that I have the honour to be,

Madam,

Your most sincere admirer,

T. NORRIS.

“ Not a word, Sir Charles, will I say for
“ you indeed. Write for yourself, if you
“ please.”

Mr. Norris had scarcely finished reading his letter, before Lord Timon, who was engaged to dine with Sir Charles that day, arrived; accompanied by his only daughter, a fine girl of about fourteen, his chaplain, a led captain, and two large spaniels; which, together with Mr. Poundem, who dropped in by chance, made up a good country party; and Mr. Norris's remarks upon conversation were remembered more than once, during the course of the day.

C H A P IX.

More Remarks on Conversation. A Hint or two, concerning an Order of Men called Jolly-Fellows.

—NO; it is impossible.—I have endeavoured, reader, to give you some account of the conversation which passed amongst all the good company to which I introduced you in the last chapter; but though I cannot say that they were ever long silent, I nevertheless find it impossible to retail any of their conversation. All I can recollect is, that one part, and that no small one, of the afternoon was taken up in a dispute between the chaplain and the apothecary, about the proper length of a gun-barrel for cock-shooting; which, if his lordship had not acted the part of a moderator between them, would have ended in a downright quarrel. For as each grounded his arguments, not upon his own strength, but upon the supposed weakness of his antagonist; the parson asserting that an apothecary could know nothing of shooting, and the apothecary as warmly insisting that a parson ought not; every reply tended to exasperate

them more and more against each other, without bringing the matter in question at all nearer to a decision. At length my lord interposed, and settled the affair, according to custom, by a bet. This was the only part of the day in which the majority of the company were not talking at the same time; and, of course, this part of the conversation was the only one which was intelligible enough to be remembered. Possibly, reader, you may think this might as well have been forgot; but, if you live in the country, and make a point of forgetting all conversation upon subjects of no more consequence than the length of a gun-barrel, you will very soon have but little use for your memory. The case was rather altered when they left the bottle and retired to coffee and the ladies. The chaplain and the captain, who had hitherto been the loudest and the fastest talkers, except Mr. Poundem, who was a match for them both, were now the most silent part of the company. The company of women in general throws an air of order and decorum into the conversation, which effectually stops the mouth of what is called a jolly-fellow; and of course it is a favourite maxim with all jolly-fellows, that the two worst half hours in a day, are the half hour before dinner, and the half hour which the ladies usually stay after the cloth is removed.

removed. And possibly the empire of modesty has no greater triumph than this involuntary tribute, which this most lawless order of men pay to it. To inspire the thinking part of mankind with veneration and respect, is a small matter; but to be able to stop that torrent of noise and ribaldry, which overwhelms all other considerations, is something to boast of. There is not perhaps, in nature, so dull an animal as a jolly-fellow. I hope, reader, thou art not of the species; indeed I need not much fear it; your jolly-fellow never reads. Thinking and reading he leaves to the stupid part of mankind, who have no spirit: a man of spirit should do nothing but drink and sing and holla!—till he can neither holla, drink nor sing. His aim is to be very merry, therefore he is very noisy; and because saying any thing which might excite a laugh would require some degree of thought, he chuses the laugh without the joke, which is least trouble: or else he substitutes something by way of joke, some specimen of practical wit, as throwing a bottle at a looking-glass, burning his own or his neighbour's wig, pinning your coat to the waistcoat with a red hot poker, swallowing half a pint of brandy and gun-powder, and giving a view-holla after it, or some such matter which requires more activity of body than mind, and which the society

of jolly-fellows have acknowledged, time out of mind, to be super-excellent jokes, and applaud accordingly. I know a man at this time, the delight of the whole order of Bucks, who never mention his name without the highest encomiums on his wit and humour; and, by way of proof, tell you, that he once nailed a tavern-waiter to the table, by striking a fork through his ear, and drank a bottle of claret sitting behind the man upon the black-horse at Charing-Cross. This is the kind of men whom the company of ladies effectually silence; they cannot so far conquer all sense of breeding, as to holla before them; and they have nothing to say but, “Dammee, drink;” so what can they do? The chaplain and the captain might be said to stand very high in the rank of jolly-fellows; which indeed was the footing upon which they were entertained at Lord Timon’s: for though his lordship was not himself a very jolly-fellow, as he had, nevertheless, a large election interest to keep up in the county, it was very necessary for him to have such people about him. Accordingly, whenever the company were too serious, the parson was called upon for a good song, which with the help of a bassoon, made of the hearth broom, by way of symphony, imitating an old woman, or a knife-grinder’s wheel, or the rumbling of a wheel-barrow, or a tabor
and

and pipe, or some such ingenious plagiarism from Shuter and Skeggs, seldom failed to enliven them, and produce a loud laugh, which it was the business of the captain to conclude with a view-holla, and see that every man filled a bumper.

Naturalists have observed, with what truth I will not pretend to determine, that even the most noxious animal in nature is not without its use. In the same manner I think myself bound to acknowledge, that some use may be made even of such an animal as your jolly-fellow. Indeed the use which may be made of them in election matters is very astonishing. Adepts in this science have long found, that, next to the weightiest of all arguments, there is nothing wins the heart of a freeholder so soon as mirth and drink: nay, even they whose conscience or pride would make them look sour at a bribe, have not been proof against the enticing allurements of a jolly-fellow. As long therefore as electioneering continues to be the madness of the times, and candidates and great men find it as easy, and at least as cheap, to sing and holla people out of their votes, as to gain them by more direct means, I don't know any character which bids fairer for being in general repute than your staunch jolly-fellow: but as this use, barring acci-

dents, occurs but once in seven years, it is I think great pity that they cannot be laid up in some place of safety for the other six, like militia arms for eleven months out of the twelve, to prevent their doing any mischief. There would, to be sure, be a horrid crash, upon their being all let loose ; but then, as one should have fair warning, one might take that opportunity of going to Paris or Rome to be out of harm's way. If a man will stand near the militia, when they are first permitted to fire, it is his own fault if he gets a mischief : and indeed, if one takes notice of the distress a jolly-fellow is in, when he is not in use, one shall be convinced, that shutting him up would be doing him a kindness ; he does not know what to do, nor what to say, nor where to put his hands.

In this situation were the chaplain and the captain in Sir Charles's drawing room. The captain, with his hands in his waistcoat pockets, stood looking out at the window, with his mouth drawn up in the attitude of whistling. Fortunately for the chaplain, one of my lord's spaniels had found her way into the room ; so he pulled her ears, parted her head, and said, " Poor duchess, poor duchess."

The rest of the company wanted not entertainment,

tainment, for Mrs. Barker had sat down to the harpsichord, and was accompanying Lady Mary to a song.

Every body said handsome things of her singing. Lord Timon said many civil things to Mrs. Barker, and wished his daughter could be so happy as to have opportunities of improving under her instructions.

“ Ah, Mr. Poundem,” said Lady Mary, “ if your story had been true, this lady and I “ might have been better acquainted.”

Poor Poundem was a good deal confounded, and finding the laugh beginning to rise against him, he pretended immediate business, and got off as fast as he could.

The company took their leave soon after, and Lady Mary was grown so fond of Mrs. Barker, that she would make her promise to pass a few days with her before she left the country. My lord, who was a widower, and whose heart was won by any body who paid the least attention to his daughter, prevailed upon Sir Charles and the gentlemen not to divide the party, and the day but one following was fixed for their visit.

CHAP. X.

*The Party visit Lord Timon. Return and set out
for London.*

AN unhappy difference in election interest, which had subsisted between Lord Timon and the late Sir George Beville, had made his lordship and Sir Charles almost strangers to each other. But Sir Charles was by no means inclined to keep it up, as he was a very moderate man in all affairs of that kind, and moreover was not so violently attached to the country-interest as his father had been: he was therefore very glad of this opportunity of improving his acquaintance with his lordship, and of visiting upon a less formal footing; especially as the young Lady Mary, who was just coming into the world, manifested a disposition so peculiarly amiable and engaging, that he could not help reflecting with pleasure upon the hopes he had of forming an intimacy between her and a person whose mind he thought seemed cast in the same mould. He spent therefore two or three days at Lord Timon's with great satisfaction; and the rather,

as the chaplain and the captain were gone upon a cock-shooting party for a week into the adjoining county; which greatly added to the pleasure of the whole party, except old Mr. Barker, who, as his whole amusement lay in exploring new and uncommon characters, was a good deal disappointed. The first day, at dinner, he could not help observing upon calling for a bumper of strong beer, "Ay, if
 " my friend the chaplain was here, I should
 " not be obliged to drink by myself, I dare
 " say."

The company smiled. " My chaplain," said his lordship, who seemed to think the remark was not entirely to his advantage, " is
 " a very good-natured man; and though he
 " has his foible, he is never absent, that I don't
 " miss him. Possibly I may say, as Prince
 " Hal does by Falstaff, I could better
 " spare a better man: however, he is a very
 " honest fellow, and I only wish he was any
 " thing rather than a clergyman." " The
 " clergy, my Lord," replied Norris, " are
 " but men, and liable to the same dispositions
 " and the same failings as other men are. It
 " is therefore, I think, a great pity that some
 " expedient cannot be found out to prevent
 " people from going into orders, till a time of
 " life when their natural disposition may be
 " sup-

“ supposed to be seen, or at least till the
 “ choice of their profession may be the act of
 “ their own reason, rather than the inclina-
 “ tion of their parents : because, in that case,
 “ the same reason which leads them to chuse
 “ a grave profession, will dispose them to be-
 “ have with decency in it. There is no say-
 “ ing how a young man of two-and-twenty
 “ will turn out : it is just the age for allow-
 “ ances, and unfortunately neither the pro-
 “ fession itself, nor the idea the world have
 “ of it, will bear to make any.” “ But
 “ then, Mr. Norris,” said his lordship, “ if
 “ you keep a man till thirty years of age, be-
 “ fore you determine upon the method by
 “ which he is to earn his bread, he runs a
 “ great risque of having, at forty, no bread
 “ to eat ; to say nothing of how he is to be
 “ maintained in the mean time.”

“ It is very true, my Lord,” said Sir Charles,
 “ and therefore I am afraid the evil we com-
 “ plain of lies too deep for redress ; for it
 “ seems necessarily connected with the union
 “ which subsists between the civil and religi-
 “ ous establishments. As long as the admi-
 “ nistration of religious ordinances must be
 “ attended with certain emoluments, upon
 “ which the professors are to subsist, they, as
 “ well as the professors of any other art or
 “ science,

" science, must enter upon their occupation
 " at the time of life when it becomes neces-
 " sary for them to provide for themselves ; and
 " have therefore the same chance of turning
 " out unfit for their business, as they would
 " have had in any other occupation ; and in
 " that case, as there is unfortunately no time
 " allowed for probation, the interest and cre-
 " dit of the profession must give way to the
 " necessity of the trade." " The establish-
 " ing," said Norris, " that state of proba-
 " tion you mention, might afford some relief
 " in this case ; I mean, if more encourage-
 " ment, or at least less discouragement, was
 " given to those young people, who, after
 " having been a year or two in orders, and
 " finding themselves unfit for the task they
 " have undertaken, are willing to quit both
 " the profession and the emoluments attending
 " it, and betake themselves to some other
 " means for a livelihood. Indeed it was origi-
 " nally intended by the church, that the
 " order of deacons should be, as it were,
 " in a state of probation ; and if this was
 " the custom, the church would be rid of
 " many unworthy servants, who might be
 " made useful members of the community in
 " any other occupation : but at present,
 " there is such a stigma affixed to the notion
 " of

“ of quitting this profession, after having
“ once engaged in it, that the man who is
“ bold enough to venture it, is generally
“ looked upon as an abandoned profligate,
“ and seldom has much countenance shewn
“ him afterwards.” “ But,” said old Mr.
Barker, “ do you clergy hold that to be or-
“ thodox ? have not you a canon against it ?
“ and don’t you quote some text of scripture
“ to prove it unlawful ? *He that hath set his*
“ *hand to the plough, and looketh back —*”
“ With regard to our canons,” replied Nor-
ris, “ they are a mere *brutum fulmen* ; we
“ have one against wearing white stockings
“ and wrought night-caps ; but with regard
“ to the texts of scripture, whatever people
“ of more ingenuity than judgment may
“ pretend to have discovered, I acknowledge,
“ taking the establishment of the church of
“ England in the state it is now in, I can-
“ not find one that is against the practice in
“ question. Hypothetical men may indeed
“ find some detached sentence in some part or
“ other of the Bible, which they may inter-
“ pret as a support to almost any opinion
“ whatever ; and in that way the text you
“ mention has been thought to declare against
“ those who quit the sacerdotal office : but,
“ in my opinion, it has not the least to do
“ with

" with it, but related wholly to the embracing the tenets of the Christian religion, and returning afterwards to the errors of Judaism or Paganism." " So," said my lord, " you really, Mr. Norris, see no reason why my chaplain should not lay aside his gown to-morrow, if he likes it?" " So far from it, my Lord," replied he, " that I am clearly of opinion he would, by putting on his brown coat, do more good to himself, in proportion as he would do less harm to every one else within reach of his example, than by keeping on his black one." " But why," said lady Mary, blushing as she spoke, " should any gentleman behave so in a brown coat, as he should be ashamed to do in a black one?" " If a man, my dear Lady Mary," said Norris, " had one fiftieth part of your goodness and simplicity, he might even wear what coat he pleased." " Well said my little preacher," said his lordship. " Do you know, Mr. Norris, that there is nobody in this house that the chaplain is afraid of but Mary?" " I don't wonder at it, my Lord," said Norris, " in the least: for, to a person who is not scrupulously nice in the performance of his duty, the most innocent person will be always the
 " most

“ most formidable. I have observed that
 “ there are few people so abandoned as not
 “ to express themselves with some degree of
 “ caution before children: they tell you it
 “ is for fear of corrupting them; but I am
 “ convinced it arises, in a great measure, from
 “ a fear of exposing themselves: there is a
 “ consciousness of inferiority annexed to
 “ guilt, when it is contrasted with perfect
 “ innocence; for which reason, nothing is
 “ so cutting as the rebuke of a child. A
 “ friend of mine,” continued he, “ had con-
 “ tracted a habit of swearing at almost every
 “ word he spoke. I, and several of his more
 “ serious friends, had often remonstrated with
 “ him upon the folly and wickedness of it,
 “ and got laughed at for our pains. One
 “ day he let fly a tremendous volley before a
 “ son of his, a fine sensible boy of about
 “ ten years old. When he was cool, the
 “ boy came up to him, Pray, papa, says he,
 “ cut off my head. No, you rogue,
 “ said he; what should I cut off your head
 “ for? But why won’t you, papa? said
 “ the boy. Why because I love you too well,
 “ replied he. But, papa, says the boy,
 “ suppose I was to tease you every day, and
 “ bring you a knife and provoke you? Why
 “ then, said he, may be some day or
 “ other

"other I should take you at your word.
 "O papa, said the boy, then I would not
 "advise you to beg God Almighty every day
 "to damn you so as you do, for if you pro-
 "voke him, may be, some day or other, he'll
 "take you at your word. My friend was
 "struck, and the child's rebuke effected what
 "all our arguments could not: from that day
 "to this, I never heard him swear an oath."
 My lord thanked Mr. Norris for his story.
 "I am," said he, with a frankness which
 very well became him, "a little too much
 "addicted to that foolish custom myself, espe-
 "cially when I am warm; but for the future
 "I promise you, Mr. Norris, I shall think of
 "your friend and his boy." "And I promise
 "you, Mr. Norris," said Lady Mary, "that
 "whenever my lord is angry, I will not forget
 "to bring him a large knife."

The two families seemed so greatly pleased
 with each other, that they all wished Sir
 Charles had not fixed his day for returning to
 London. But as his affairs were in a ticklish
 situation, he did not think it prudent to defer
 getting to town by the time he thought Sir
 Harry Clayton's family would be arrived.
 "However," said my lord, "we shall not
 "be long after you." Lady Mary seemed
 really sorry to part with Mrs. Barker, and
 Mr.

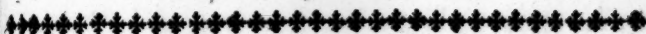
Mr. Norris, to whom she was grown very partial: Sir Charles therefore could not help whispering her, that he hoped before the summer to introduce another lady to the honour of her acquaintance, who, he did not doubt, would be able to prevail on Mrs. Barker to pass some part of every summer at the hall, and that then he promised himself the greatest satisfaction in cultivating an intimacy at the Park. Lady Mary expressed her joy, and, promising to keep his secret, took an affectionate leave of Mrs. Barker, whom she promised to see as soon as ever she came to town; and the next morning Sir Charles and all his company set out for London.

9 MR 53

END of the FIFTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK VI.



CHAP. I.

A small Hint to the Court of Criticism.

The Design of these Memoirs; what they were intended to contain, and what not.

I HAVE now, reader, brought you to the last book of these Memoirs; which it may possibly give you more pleasure to hear than me to tell. An author is not so soon weary of his talk as a reader may probably be of his; self-approbation keeps the one awake, whilst there may be little perhaps, but the

the spirit of criticism, to keep the other. With regard to that, if any reader shall think it worth his while to criticise a work of this nature, he has my free leave and thanks; all I bargain for is, that no critic nor society of critics shall presume to pull to pieces both the author and his book, without knowing the one, or reading the other: a method of proceeding which, though it may be very easy and convenient for those who are obliged to criticise so many books, in so many days, is not however altogether so fair; and which is I believe in practice no where, but in the supreme court of criticism established, by way of *monthly* tribunal, in this metropolis. In this court indeed, I am told, the professors of criticism are arrived to a degree of perfection in the art, quite unknown to, and, I dare say, unthought of by Aristotle or Longinus, Horace or Quintillian, Dacier or Boileau, Pope or Addison. The critics of their days, by frequent reading and maturely considering the authors they criticised, arrived at length to a true knowledge of their beauties, and their defects, pointing out the former with taste, and the latter with candour: but it was reserved for the critics of our own times to see the whole of an author's design by his title-page, discover all his failings by his table of
con-

contents, and whip up a pert, declamatory abuse of the whole from the ten first pages.

I know not, reader, what opinion you may entertain of the work before you, now you begin to come within sight of the conclusion. If it has given you any amusement, I am afraid I must be obliged to acknowledge that it has done all that I ever intended it should. To say the truth, I have seen so many writers, who have set out with professing to kill two birds with one stone, and to afford their readers both amusement and instruction, but who have taken their aim so ill, as really to hit neither the one nor the other, that I determined to endeavour only to amuse my readers; and if I could do that without making them any worse, to be very well contented, without aspiring to the hope of making them much better. I cannot think that men are so easily reclaimed from vicious habits, as for a satire, or even a sermon, to effect their reformation: the morality in both is read, praised, and forgotten. Neither perhaps is the idea of a perfect character, by way of pattern, the properest to excite emulation; the distance between that and the common run of mankind, is so palpable and disheartening, that it defeats its own purpose, and instead of exciting emulation, dictates despair. I have therefore endeavoured to avoid the parade of perfection,

which always seems attended with so much difficulty, as to discourage any person from endeavouring to attain to it, and have chosen rather to shew instances of a natural goodness of heart, and sweetness of temper, which produce a rectitude of conduct with so much ease, that the difficulty seems to be how to act otherwise. The characters which I have chosen to throw an innocent sort of ridicule upon, are mostly such as are rather foolish than wicked, such as have rather foibles than vices: for, though a good character may not have its effect with regard to improving the mind, a bad one will always act strongly the contrary way. The goodness of the one is easily forgotten, but the viciousness of the other cleaves to the mind of every reader, and has its effect according to the disposition of him who receives it: if that happens to be good, the picture of vice may carry a degree of disgust with it which may prevent its doing him much harm; if it happens to be more inclined to evil, which, without being uncandid, we may, I fear, suppose is more than an even chance, the vicious images will strengthen that propensity; and however careful the author may have been in rendering strict poetical justice, by making punishment the certain effect of criminal indulgence, the ideas of

of the indulgence will remain upon the mind, long after those of the punishment are effaced. I am convinced therefore that the introducing vicious characters either into books of this kind, or upon the stage, by way of exposing them to shame and ridicule, is a very dangerous experiment, especially for young minds: for as Dean Swift's admirable piece of irony, called "Advice to Servants," was said to have made more bad servants than ever it corrected, by teaching them tricks, which, without his wit, they never would have found out; so, a series of crimes and follies may give an insight into vice, which the moral drawn from them may never be able to prevent being put in practice.

Another thing which I have endeavoured to avoid in this little history, is every thing that tends to the marvelous, or which is indeed at all out of the road of the common occurrences of life. Extraordinary events, and surprising incidents, happen to so few people, that they have, in general, no effect upon the minds of common readers, and serve only to fill the heads of young people with romantic notions and wild ideas, which either are never met with in real life, or if they are—the more is the pity. The life of an honest man, or even some years of it, tolerably conversant in the world, may afford incidents sufficient, with the

natural remarks upon them, to furnish amusing and even instructive memoirs, without having recourse to elopements, kidnappings, duels, disguises, exchanges of children in the cradle, and various other extraordinary matters which are calculated only to make the reader stare, and rarely exist but in novels.—It is not sufficient for an author, who draws his materials from nature and experience, that he keeps within the bounds of possibility ; transactions, which happen but once in a century, have little to do in a picture of human life, and can at best please but a few people ; whereas the incidents which fall under every one's inspection, like a rural landscape, will please universally, from the mere force of nature. Such were my ideas in writing these Memoirs ; whether they at all correspond with yours who read them, I cannot pretend to say. However that may be, it is high time now to resume them, and hasten to the conclusion.

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles arrives in Town. Visits Mrs. Stapleton, who informs him of what had passed at Sir Harry Clayton's, since her last Account.

WHEN Sir Charles arrived in town, he was very well pleased to find two cards which had been left that morning; the one from Mrs. Stapleton, informing him that she was arrived in town with Sir Harry Clayton's family the evening before, and should be glad to see him the first half hour he had to spare; the other from Governor Beville, informing him that he was come to town for a few weeks, and would dine with him that day. He did not defer a moment waiting on Mrs. Stapleton, and, by good fortune, found her at home and alone. "Never," said Sir Charles, "had any man the obligations to a friend, that I have to you." "I am very glad you think so," replied she, "for I assure you I have worked very hard for you; but I believe I have succeeded at last: I

I 3

"fancy

“fancy you may make a visit in Brook-Street
 “whenever you please.” “You transport
 “me,” cried he. “Have you then prevailed
 “on Sir Harry to admit my visits?” “Not
 “I,” replied she: “you don’t think, that af-
 “ter I had been at all that pains to get rid
 “of your rival, and left poor Harriet with-
 “out a lover to her back, that I would make
 “so ill an use of my power as to beg to have you
 “admitted to fill up the vacancy?” “Why,
 “does not Sir Harry expect me then?” cried
 Sir Charles a little disconcerted. “Expect
 “you!” replied she: “No, he is frightened
 “out of his wits lest you should not come.
 “I have given it as my opinion that the treat-
 “ment he gave you, was so very different from
 “what you had a right to expect, that you
 “will not return, and what is more, that I
 “think you ought not: I have promised,
 “however, to use my interest with you, and
 “if I can prevail, am, as it were, by acci-
 “dent, to call there with you to-morrow
 “morning: but remember, you are not to know
 “a word of this concerted plan between Sir
 “Harry and me.” Sir Charles’s great joy was
 visible in his countenance. “I see,” said
 she, “you are happy; I see you enjoy your
 “prospects; but what would I have given, to
 “have had you overheard all that has passed
 “on

“ on your account ! O ! if you had but seen
 “ with what an affected air of indifference I
 “ talked of your cousin Lord Beville : upon
 “ my word, Sir Charles, you have a great
 “ deal to answer for ; for I practised more de-
 “ ceit upon your account in the last week
 “ that I staid in Suffolk, than ever I did up-
 “ on my own in my whole life.” “ You
 “ could not,” said Sir Charles, “ have given
 “ me a more convincing proof of your friend-
 “ ship, than by acting in a manner to which I
 “ know you have so great an aversion, in order to
 “ serve me. But what said Sir Harry ?” “ O,”
 “ cried she, “ he bit at once : Is Sir Charles of
 “ the same family with Lord Beville ? O yes,
 “ said I, his nearest relation : if Lord Be-
 “ ville dies without heirs, his title and estate
 “ centre in Sir Charles’s family. Sir Har-
 “ ry’s face grew as long as my arm. Where
 “ is Sir Charles ? cried he with a sigh. At
 “ present I believe in Northamptonshire, said
 “ I, carelessly ; probably though going to town
 “ by this time. O Mrs. Stapleton, and ah
 “ Mrs. Stapleton, and a shake of the head,
 “ and then another sigh. I kept intent upon
 “ my knotting ; at last, with another long
 “ sigh, out it came ; we have been too hasty
 “ in that affair, said he ; you, my dear Ma-
 “ dam, have helped us to repair one *faux pas*,
 I 4 “ could

“ could not you, could not you give us a little of
“ your assistance towards rectifying another? I
“ make no doubt, Sir Harry, said I with a very
“ grave look, but Sir Charles was very fond
“ of Harriet; and if he had met with a re-
“ ception, which from his birth, his fortune,
“ and, give me leave to say, his personal me-
“ rit [Sir Charles bowed] he had a right to
“ demand; I believe he would have preferred
“ your daughter to any person in the world,
“ and have offered you a *carte blanche*: but I
“ don’t know; young men of rank and for-
“ tune are not so plenty in the world; and
“ if a man is a little sensible that he is worth
“ accepting, he does not like to be refused.
“ Sir Harry fell into one of his brown studies,
“ and looked so disappointed, and so humble,
“ and so sorry, that I could not help having
“ some compassion for him; but I was afraid
“ of giving up the point too soon, lest he
“ should suspect that I had been in a plot
“ against him. I cannot but acknowledge, Sir
“ Harry, said I, with an affected concern,
“ that I was a good deal hurt to see you, be-
“ fore we left Bath, so much attached to
“ Lord B. who I knew had no farther inten-
“ tion in his attendance upon Harriet, than to
“ amuse himself for the time with the prettiest
“ girl in the place: I knew it to be his con-
“ stant

"stant custom, wherever he happened to be,
 "to make love, as he calls it, to the finest
 "woman there; I was therefore sensible there
 "was nothing to be expected from that quar-
 "ter, and even if there had, a man of Lord
 "B.'s moderate share of understanding, and
 "small estate, was not likely to have made
 "her either very happy in her mind, or easy
 "in her situation; and as to his rank, an
 "Irish peer, in this peer-making age, is no
 "such mighty matter after all. I was there-
 "fore very glad when I found you undeceived,
 "because, in the first place, I was sorry you
 "should indulge yourself in the prospect of
 "an affair which I knew was never likely to
 "take place, and, in the next, I was in hopes
 "you would then have gladly listened to the
 "proposals of the only man in the world who
 "could in every respect make your daughter
 "happy. But I cannot say how greatly I
 "was hurt when I found that you had quitted
 "the cause of Lord B. only to espouse that of
 "such a wretch as Sir Isaac; and when Sir
 "Charles complained to me that he would
 "have waited on you in town, but that La-
 "dy Clayton, whom he met at the play, in
 "a manner forbid him, I own I was really
 "very much concerned, and could not blame
 "Sir Charles for going out of town, with

“ some resolutions not much in your favour.
 “ O don’t, do not, my dear Mrs. Stapleton,
 “ cried he, recapitulate any more instances of
 “ my folly ; I have been very, very foolish,
 “ and, for any thing I know, thrown away
 “ the most probable chance of getting a
 “ peerage into my family, that I may ever
 “ have as long as I live. But surely, surely
 “ your interest with Sir Charles might do
 “ something ; I know he has a high opinion
 “ ———and then he ran on for half an hour
 “ about my sense and my goodness, and all
 “ that, in order to bring me into temper. At
 “ last I pretended to comply, and to be
 “ pleased with the civil things he said to me ;
 “ may be more than pretended, for a man
 “ must be a fool indeed, if we think him so
 “ at the time he is commending us ; however
 “ that was, I did not much want to be flat-
 “ tered into a promise to try every thing in
 “ my power to bring you back to your former
 “ good disposition towards Harriet, and to
 “ make you forget there ever were such men
 “ as Lord B. and Sir Isaac Rupee in the
 “ world. And now how do you feel your-
 “ self disposed towards a reconciliation ?”
 “ I never,” cried Sir Charles, “ was less in-
 “ clined to be obstinate in my life ; forget
 “ and forgive is the only maxim in the world
 “ with

“with me just now.” “Well, you are a
 “good Christian, I know,” replied Mrs.
 Stapleton, “but I think, if you please, you
 “had better not give way too soon; what do
 “you think now of my going by myself to-
 “morrow morning, and telling Sir Harry
 “that——” “O by no means in the world,”
 interrupted Sir Charles, “the value of a ge-
 “nerous action depends entirely upon doing
 “it with a good grace.” “Well, well,”
 said she, “don’t be frightened, it shall see its
 “mistress to-morrow, so it shall: these lo-
 “vers are so impetuous.—O, by the way,
 “pray what is become of my lover? Why
 “what a mad-cap must you think me, to
 “imagine I would not be offended at a love-
 “letter from a man I never saw in my life.”
 “Offended!” cried Sir Charles. “Why I
 “look upon it to be the greatest triumph you
 “ever had in your life. To make a man you
 “have seen fall in love with you is nothing;
 “every girl with a pair of black eyes in her
 “head can do that; but to kill at fourscore
 “miles distance——” “I have a great no-
 “tion, Sir Charles,” said she, “that I spy a
 “snake in the grass here; I verily believe
 “you intend your friend and I should play at
 “being in love till we have neither of us a
 “mind to be in jest any longer.” “Why,”

replied he, a little distressed by the arch gravity of her look, "you have taken a great deal of pains to help me to a wife, why should not I take some to help you to a husband?" "I am exceedingly obliged to you," replied she, "but I have not at present much inclination to marry; but whenever I have, I promise you I will sooner take a husband of your recommendation, than my own chusing: perhaps too, your friend may be of the same way of thinking; and yet possibly neither of us may absolutely like to buy a pig in a poke." "Why then," cried Sir Charles, "you have not so good an opinion of my judgment as Norris has; for I am convinced, from what I have said to him of you, he would go to church with you to-morrow morning in a domino and masque, and never desire to see your face or person till he returned." "I'll be hanged," said she, "if I did not think, from his letter, that he was a very odd man, and now I am convinced of it." "As to that," said Sir Charles, "you will very soon be able to judge; for I am determined to bring him to pay his respects to you this evening." "Why, as to that," said she, "to be sure—any friend of your's I shall be very glad to see; but

SIR CHARLES BEVILLE. 181

"but as to any thing farther——" "Well, well," cried he, "I cannot stay to talk of that now, for I expect the governor to dine with me, and it grows late." "O," cried she, "is that magnanimous commander in town? I beg you would present my compliments to him, and let him know that I hope he will let me have the favour of seeing him now and then at a private party: tell him I'll make a half-crown whist-table for him whenever he pleases." Sir Charles thanked her for his uncle, and took his leave.



CHAP. III.

*Various Remarks. Sir Charles and Mr. Norris
visit Mrs. Stapleton.*

SIR Charles arrived at home just as the governor and Mr. Norris had agreed, that if he did not come in a quarter of an hour, they would order up dinner; for as Norris had informed the governor whither he was gone, and they both knew the situation his affairs were in, they thought it in vain to wait dinner for a man whose mind was so much employed upon other matters, that he was likely to be careless, not only of dinner time, but whether he had any dinner or not. The governor, with his watch in his hand, met him at the door. Sir Charles expressed the real joy he felt at seeing him in town, and apologised for being so late before he returned. "Ay, ay, we excuse you," cried the governor: "we excuse you; ha, Norris," and giving a cunning wink with his eye at Norris, shewed he thought himself as sagacious in divining the business he had been about, as if Norris had not informed him of it. "You old batchelors," said Sir Charles, to shew he could

take a hint, "know these matters so well, "there's no cheating you." "Very true, "very true," said the governor; "I never "was mistaken in an affair of that kind in "my life; it is amazing to think the number "of flirtations I discover at Bath." And indeed what he said was very true, for he never saw a lady and gentleman dance twice together, that he did not suspect an intrigue between them; in which it was sometimes difficult to determine which to admire most, his sagacity, or his invention: but as he himself always imputed the discovery to the former, and had no little satisfaction in so doing, it would have been cruel to have convinced him, which however would have been no easy matter to accomplish, that it was generally the mere effect of the latter. I cannot, indeed, say that I know any talent which is more soothing to the pride of human nature, than this of sagacity; nor, of course, any that is more pretended to. Every body foresees every thing: the more sanguine and less cautious venture to say, "I foretel how that will "turn out;" the more careful content themselves with waiting till an event has happened, and then tell you, "they always thought that "would be the case;" which, as it is pretty difficult to contradict them, establishes the opinion

opinion of their sagacity with less risque than the former run, who are often reduced to the necessity of acknowledging that they thought so once, but (by way of saving clause) that they very soon saw to the contrary. Governor Beville was generally amongst the former class; but whenever he happened, which was pretty often, to be mistaken, he always saw his error long before it could be pointed out to him. "Did not I tell you, Sir Charles," cried he, with great exultation, "that you "had nothing to fear from Lord B.?" "You "did indeed," said Sir Charles, "and you "was perfectly right in your conjectures." "Ay, ay," said he, shaking his head and winking, "let me alone to find out those "matters; and take my word for it, as I "told you before, you will have more plague "with that Sir Isaac than you are aware of." It was unlucky—Nothing is so dangerous, especially to those who are not much accustomed to it, as a little success: the governor, like many an enterprising genius, could not be contented to stop when he was well. Sir Charles was forced to retract the commendation he had just bestowed on his foresight, and inform him that Sir Isaac had long ago withdrawn his pretensions. It was unfortunate that he had not been cautious enough
to

to ask a question or two concerning him before he ventured to exert his sagacity a second time; it would have saved him a blush; but the change came so suddenly upon him, that he had not time to foresee it; he had therefore nothing to do but to be very glad to hear what he could not divine, and to inquire into the circumstances of his defeat. Sir Charles, under a promise of secrecy, let him into the whole of Mrs. Stapleton's management, which diverted the governor highly: "She's a clever woman," said he; "and I always thought so." And there his sagacity went upon sure grounds. "By the way, Norris," said Sir Charles, "you and I are to wait upon her this evening." "I am heartily glad of it," said Norris, "for I longed to know what footing I was upon with her." The governor's sagacity had met with a little encouragement with regard to Mrs. Stapleton, since its defeat with regard to Sir Isaac, and so he was tempted to hazard another conjecture; and being confirmed by a little archness which he thought he spied in Norris's look, "Ahah!" cried he, "old friend, are you thereabouts?" "Well—thus every body hunts in couples but myself: I was in hopes, friend Norris, I should have kept you to lend me a hand
"to

“ to laugh at the matrimonial shackles ; but
“ I have heard a man is never too old to learn,
“ nor troth, I fear, to play the fool.” “ Why,
“ surely,” said Norris, “ you are not grown so
“ very an old batchelor as to rail at matri-
“ mony.” “ If you chuse,” said the gover-
nor, laughing, “ to be led about in a string,
“ I have no objection ; but I remember
“ seeing in some book or other that there is
“ no woman so perfect, as not to give her
“ husband cause to repent of his bargain once
“ a day ; and I would have you remember it
“ too ; that’s all.” “ Ay,” replied Norris,
“ that is the quaint remark of a snarling
“ French author, who had rather say a smart
“ thing than a true one. But there is a large
“ volume which I study, called the Book of
“ Nature, which tells me just the contrary.”
The governor, who had raked together all
the common-place arguments, or rather sar-
casms, against matrimony, which are to be
found in the performance of every satirist from
Juvenal to Rochefoucault, and in the mouth
of every old maid and batchelor, was pre-
paring to retail them with that kind of envi-
ous pleasantry which unmarried people al-
ways indulge when they arrive at a certain
age ; but Sir Charles, who was a strenuous
advocate for the contrary opinion, endeavoured

to

to change the subject. The governor however did not seem willing to give up the topic. People who can talk fluently upon a very few subjects, when one of those few happens to be started, seldom care to part with it, till they have said all they have to say. He had therefore begun to laugh by way of prelude to some story about a dog with a bone at his tail, when a servant entering to announce dinner, stopped him short.—In the evening the governor having promised Sir Charles to eat with him whilst he staid in town, adjourned to the coffee-house, and the two friends attended Mrs. Stapleton.

They found her alone. Sir Charles introduced his friend, and was very well pleased to see an air of surprize in her countenance, which, though he did not precisely know the meaning of it, shewed he thought that she was more pleased with his appearance than she expected to be. Sir Charles's penetration was rather more certain than the governor's, and he shewed it here; for he hit upon her thoughts with great exactness.

The true state of the case was this. The idea Mrs. Stapleton had formed of Mr. Norris was simply that of Sir Charles's tutor; with which she had, without well knowing why, connected that of a large grizzle

grizzle wig, and other appurtenances of a grave and learned divine, for such, notwithstanding the gaiety of his letter, she knew him to be. Nothing therefore could well equal her surprize, when Sir Charles introduced to her a genteel looking, well-dressed man, in his own hair, his clothes made like other peoples, and an air and manner which spoke him some years younger than he really was; that is to say, he was really thirty-seven, and might with much appearance of truth have struck off the odd seven years. As therefore Mrs. Stapleton had never recollected that it was not necessary for a tutor to be more than twelve or thirteen years older than his pupil, she was almost in doubt whether Sir Charles was not diverting himself with putting a false Mr. Norris upon her; and so strong footing had her first idea gained in her mind, that, for the first quarter of an hour, she expected every moment the grizzle wig to make its appearance. But before the next quarter was elapsed, she had so well reconciled herself to the change, that a deceit of that kind would have vexed her very much.

Mr. Norris was not disappointed at all; he expected, from Sir Charles's account,
to

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE. 189

to find Mrs. Stapleton one of the most agreeable women he had ever met with, and it turned out accordingly.

When the company were all so well pleased with one another, it was no wonder if the visit was protracted rather beyond the limits which the strict rules of ceremony might have allotted to a first visit; but there is nothing which people of a certain rank of understanding so easily get over, as common rules which have not their foundation in reason and good sense, and have nothing but custom or convenience to plead for their observance.

Ceremony, says somebody, keeps fools at a distance; and in some cases it is fit for little else; sensible people easily dispense with it in favour of one another.

The gentlemen did not take their leave of Mrs. Stapleton, till the rattling of carriages hinted to them that parties were breaking up.

Sir Charles promised to call upon her in the morning, in order to have the appearance of a second introduction at Sir Harry Clayton's, and Mr. Norris hoped she would do him the honour to put his name

name amongst the admissible part of her visitors; to which she had the goodness to bow an assent, and so they parted for the night.



CHAP. IV.

Two Causes tried in the Court of Conscience with different Decisions. An Ounce of Candour better than a Pound of Wit. A Walk in the Morning the best Receipt to cure Cowardice.

AS soon as the gentlemen were gone, Mrs. Stapleton stirred the fire, resumed her great chair, and whilst the servant laid her cloth for supper, fell into a profound reverie: from which she was somewhat roused by the appearance of her cold chicken; which, without being perfectly sensible of what she did, she cut up, eat half a mouthful, gave away her plate, said she had done, resumed her place at the fire and her reverie, which lasted till the usual hour of her retiring to rest. It is not difficult to imagine the subject of her thoughts. In truth she was considering of the reception she should give Mr. Norris at his next visit; for it required far less penetration than she was mistress of, to discover that her conjectures with regard to Sir Charles's intentions were well-grounded, and that

that probably the next visit Mr. Norris made her, might be of a very interesting nature. It was certain that she felt nothing very shocking in the thought of entering into a second marriage : nay, it was a thought which, long before she had seen Mr. Norris, she had entertained with partiality. She was indeed too well formed for society, to relish a life of solitude ; and her understanding was too good, to suffer her to mistake the dissipation of public life for society.—With minds capable of, and accustomed to, reflection, nothing palls sooner upon the enjoyment, than that pleasure which is to be sought after abroad, without any thing to crown it at home ; and though no body could enjoy pleasure more than she did, no body, at the same time, had higher ideas of that solid happiness which arises from the most endearing connection which the human mind is capable of forming. There was nothing therefore to deter her from the thoughts of a second marriage in general, but with regard to engaging in it with a man to whom she was almost a stranger, but by report, her prudence and discretion threw several obstacles in her way, which a rising inclination in his favour, of which she was but too sensible, had much difficulty to surmount. She endeavoured, as she flattered herself, to
give

give both sides fair play; and, to say the truth, examined *Le pour* and *Le contre*, with as much candour as she was able. *Le pour* took the lead, and represented Mr. Norris with all the advantages which a great understanding, improved by an unwearied attention to every thing that was worth knowing; a temper, a disposition formed to enjoy happiness, and of course to promote it; a character for integrity, candour and benevolence, which few could equal, and none excel; a person very far from disagreeable, and a manner peculiarly engaging, could give him. 'Twas sufficient to stagger a mind inclining to the other side: hers had no such inclination. However, *Le contre* was not without something to say in behalf of what is commonly called discretion: every allowance was made for the partiality of Sir Charles, from whom she had learnt all the abovesaid good qualities, except the two last; in favour of which she had more positive evidence from her own senses. Every thing was suggested with regard to procrastination, in order to the forming a judgment for herself, without depending wholly upon the report of another: in short, every thing was said, that prudence and discretion usually do say against inclination, and with the usual success. As she was ashamed, however, to give up the point at

the first hearing, she determined to consult her pillow upon it. She accordingly retired to rest; and in the morning found herself just where she had been over night; in a state of deliberation: but before she had breakfasted, the arrival of Sir Charles and Mr. Norris put an end to the dispute, and convinced her that her's was that kind of deliberation, the consequence of which to every woman the poet told us long ago.

Whilst the above cause had been trying at Mrs. Stapleton's fire-side, the two gentlemen had been engaged in a different sort of contest. Sir Charles, who was convinced that his own difficulties were now pretty well at an end, was in the greatest harmony of spirits imaginable; and as nothing breeds confidence like success, he could not help rallying Norris for a suspicion which his modesty had suggested, which was no other than, that Mrs. Stapleton, with her figure, easy in her fortune, and connected with people of rank, would never think of marrying him. He could not help being conscious, that though his birth was not mean, it was obscure; and though from the generosity of Sir Charles and the late Sir George Beville, his fortune was easy and independant, yet he well knew how small a chance a retired, quiet kind of man stands with

SIR CHARLES BEVILLE. 195

with a lady who has been accustomed to the more busy and elegant scenes of life ; and therefore could not help expressing his fears, that whatever civility Mrs. Stapleton might shew him, was the mere effect of her good-breeding, and her friendship for Sir Charles, and was what he ought not to build any hopes upon. Sir Charles could not help laughing at his fears, and telling him, that though he knew the world, he did not know Mrs. Stapleton ; who, though she was used to, and every way qualified to shine in, public life, had, nevertheless, the highest idea of domestic felicity. He would have it too, that he had observed a partiality and attention in her behaviour to him, which did not seem the mere effect of politeness : but Norris, who had found means to reconcile two qualities, which are at variance in almost every other man, namely, the address of the man of the world, and the diffidence of the man of letters, could not be brought to believe any such thing. This dispute lasted till they retired to rest, and concluded in a very uncommon way ; that is to say, all Sir Charles's arguments were unable to prevail on Norris to decide in favour of his own inclination, or to have a good opinion of himself.

And here, reader, a satirical writer would affect to shew you the difference between a man and a woman under the same circumstances. "See here," would he say, "Mr. Norris, a sensible man could combat not only his own inclination, but all the arguments which his friend, of whose judgment he had the highest opinion, could bring to back it; and give his discretion a complete triumph over it at last; whereas Mrs. Stapleton, whose inclination had no friend to give it any support, suffered her judgment to sustain a shameful defeat, and gave her inclination as compleat a triumph over her discretion." But, reader, I am no satirist; I esteem an ounce of candour before a pound of wit, because I look upon it to be a commodity the most difficult to be met with of any in the world, not excepting even virtue itself: nay, I am convinced it is an easier thing to lead a blameless life one's self, than to be strictly candid in our judgment upon the actions of others. In order therefore to preserve the appearance at least of this valuable qualification, I shall suppose, which is strictly true, that Mrs. Stapleton had no inclination that she was either afraid or ashamed to indulge; and that Mr. Norris, which is as true, had more modesty than he need have had.

In

In the morning Sir Charles, who was dressed an hour and a half before his usual time, and could not be persuaded but his watch must have stood still in the night, having quite exhausted his stock of patience, and finding that Norris did not yet arrive in the breakfast-room, went up and thundered at his door. He was not a little surprized, instead of finding him dressing, to find that he was gone out : by the time, however, he got down stairs again, Mr. Norris was pulling off his gloves by the fire. “ I have “ been taking a walk,” said he, “ to endeavour “ to get a little assurance.” “ It is the strangest “ reason for walking,” replied Sir Charles, “ that ever I heard in my life : I have heard of “ walking to get air, exercise or an appetite, “ but never to get assurance.” “ Why,” said Norris, “ every thing that you said to me “ last night has been rumbling about in my “ head ever since ; and to say the truth, I never “ had so great an inclination for any thing in “ my life as to believe you.” “ That is to say,” said Sir Charles, “ that you are in love with “ Mrs. Stapleton.” “ Troth,” replied Norris, “ was I a few years younger, I should “ think so ; but, as it is, I only have “ a very high opinion of her, and should “ be very happy to marry her.” “ Why “ then take my word for it,” said Sir Charles,

“ if your modesty does not stand in your way,
“ you may : I would advise you therefore to
“ turn it out of doors, and summon all the re-
“ solution you are master of, and try your
“ chance ; you will then, at least, have nothing
“ to reproach yourself with.” “ That is the
“ very thing,” said Norris, “ that I have been
“ taking a walk for ; to set my blood and spi-
“ rits in motion ; for there is nothing makes a
“ man so unfit for any enterprize, as under-
“ taking it with his senses half awake. I am
“ convinced, that had I been a soldier, I could
“ have fought much better after a good, smart,
“ rattling march of four or five miles, than I
“ could have done upon just putting my head
“ out of tent, with my eyes half open, and
“ nothing but my caution and apprehension
“ awake about me : I never ride with half so
“ much spirit a fox-hunting as when I trot my
“ poney seven or eight miles to the cover.”
“ Why, really,” said Sir Charles, “ you have
“ explained the notion of acquiring courage,
“ by taking a walk in the morning, in a way
“ I was not aware of, and with some degree of
“ plausibility.” “ O, Sir,” cried he, “ there
“ is nothing like it ; depend upon it ; after a
“ good sound sleep, the faculties open by de-
“ grees: the next state to sleep is the most like
“ it ; you open an eye, stretch out a limb, are
stupid

“ stupid as a brick, and barely alive : the most
 “ sleepy faculties of the mind, as fear, caution,
 “ distrust, and what the world call discretion,
 “ open next : some people never get beyond
 “ this state, and are never rightly awake all
 “ their lives ; these are the world’s prudent
 “ men, Then, when the blood begins to get
 “ into motion, the heart warms, and the ani-
 “ mal spirits bustle about with such activity, as
 “ to stir a man up to the pitch of generosity,
 “ ambition, love, courage, and all the stren-
 “ uous passions of the mind, which prudent
 “ people restrain, discreet people shake their
 “ heads at, and lively people are perhaps too
 “ apt to carry to excess. Such a man the
 “ French, according to my system, call *Eveillé*.
 “ And a sleepy man, without such passions,
 “ must always be without their concomitant
 “ virtues ; for Rousseau never made a truer
 “ observation in his life, than *Un homme sans*
 “ *defauts jamais n’eut il des grands vertus.*”

By this time the gentlemen had breakfasted,
 and went to attend Mrs. Stapleton. They
 found her, as we have already seen, just rising
 from her breakfast.

CHAP. V.

A great deal of Business done in a very little Time, and recorded in a very narrow Compass.

MR. Norris could not have arrived at an instant when Mrs. Stapleton was more disposed to receive him favourably. She had begun to canvas the affair again in her mind, and had just finished every thing which her inclination had to suggest in his favour, when, just as her discretion was going again to take its turn, he entered ; and in ten minutes time rendered every thing it had to say so ridiculous, that from that instant it never gained another audience, till, which was very soon the case, it was entirely brought over to the other side of the question.—When a lady, either from inclination or any other motive, is determined to take any step, she presently finds means not only to influence her judgment to allow of it, but to prove that it is the wisest and properest step she ever took in her life.—A very agreeable conversation very soon began, which would have lasted much longer than it did, had

had not Sir Charles's impatience to see Miss Clayton induced him to interrupt it, by putting Mrs. Stapleton in mind that it was high time to move. "Aye," said she, "it is so; for I intend, after I have introduced you there, to take a walk through the Parks, and call upon a lady in Westminster, as the morning promises to be fine." This was too favourable an opportunity for Mr. Norris to let slip; he therefore told Sir Charles, that he would call and pay his compliments to Sir Harry, "and then," continued he, "as I should be sorry to give you any interruption, possibly Mrs. Stapleton will permit me to have the honour of attending her." To which Sir Charles agreed, and Mrs. Stapleton did not think proper to disagree, and so they set out together.

Sir Harry had been prepared for Sir Charles's reception, ever since ten o'clock: and when the clock struck twelve, and no Sir Charles appeared, a visible chagrin sat upon his countenance, and he began to believe firmly that he was inexorable, and would not come. As he was intirely ignorant of the reasons which Miss Clayton had *in petto* for being convinced of the contrary, he was astonished to see her so composed: he concluded it was all affectation, and partly hinted to her that he thought

so: she neither allowed it, nor took much pains to contradict it; perhaps it was as well for her that he should think so. At last a rap at the door brought the blood into Miss Clayton's cheeks, and carried Sir Harry to the bell, which he rang with as much vehemence, as if he feared Sir Charles would go away again, if he was not let in in an instant.— There is nothing so distressing for all parties, as a preconcerted interview, which is to pass for accidental: it was impossible to see the affected surprize of Sir Harry at seeing Sir Charles in town, and to hear the civil things he said upon this unexpected favour, without thinking of the meeting between *Sir Amorous la Fool*, and *Sir John Daw*, in the *Silent Woman*. Mrs. Stapleton was at last forced to wave the conversation, for fear she should not be able to keep her countenance. Sir Charles could not conceal his joy at seeing Miss Clayton; he was a bad dissembler; and had Sir Harry been endowed with a tolerable share of penetration, he must have discovered that less contrivance, than had been used to bring him back, would have effected it.

Mrs. Stapleton inquired after Lady Clayton; Miss Clayton said she was walked out. The truth of the case was, that she did not appear, to save herself the trouble of framing

an

an excuse for disappearing. Sir Harry ordered chocolate, soon after which Mrs. Stapleton and Mr. Norris proceeded on their walk, and Sir Harry going to attend them to the door, thought proper to go into his study, and send a servant to Sir Charles, to beg his excuse for a few minutes, as a person was just come in upon business which he was obliged to attend to. And thus, after a great deal of contrivance, he accomplished the leaving two young people together, whom he had been for the last quarter of a year, with equal contrivance, endeavouring to keep asunder.

I suppose it is impossible for two people to feel more real happiness than Miss Clayton and Sir Charles felt at this interview: the retrospect upon the difficulties they had met with, and the singular means by which they had been removed, adding not a little to it.— And here let it be remembered that their joy was infinitely more sincere than that of two young people, who after bribing servants, risking lives, and performing forty extravagant *manœuvres*, make shift to drive off in a post-chaise for Scotland together, because it was not allayed by any disagreeable sensations which will arise from a consciousness of having done an unjustifiable thing, and made a father and mother wretched for their own indulgence.

dulgence. Had Sir Charles and Miss Clayton been bent upon coming together at all events, there was nothing that could have prevented them, at first, from walking out of the door, and being married at their own parish church, without any previous ceremony more than the ring and licence, as they were both of age, and Miss Clayton's fortune, independent of her father, would very well have satisfied Sir Charles: but with delicate minds, to accomplish their wishes is not the only point in view; it must be done by such means as will leave no seeds of remorse and repentance behind. Miss Clayton could no more have enjoyed her situation in life, however agreeable to her wishes it might have been, with the reflection of having attained it by acting in direct opposition to the inclination of her father, and thereby imbittering the rest of his days, than Sir Charles could have got the better of his integrity so far, as to obtain a daughter at the expence of her duty to her father; or of his pride, by obtruding himself into an alliance with any family against their inclination. They had now not only the satisfaction of indulging their own inclinations, but of finding them coincide with the wishes of every one whose happiness, jointly with their own, they were bound to consult.

With

With these pleasing reflections they had enjoyed two hours of the most enviable of all situations, when Miss Clayton began to think it was high time to put an end to a visit, the result of which she knew her father would be impatient to hear. Sir Charles was surprized, upon looking at his watch, to find it so late; and, having obtained Miss Clayton's leave to wait on Sir Harry the next morning to solicit his consent in form, he took his leave.—Norris and he met at the door; both in such seeming harmony of spirits, that it was not difficult to see they were both very well pleased with their morning's entertainment.

Mr. Norris was, in truth, very well pleased with his walk; the sun shone bright, and gave a genial, exhilarating kind of warmth, which is ever favourable to pleasurable sentiments: and as, according to his own maxim, he found his resolution grow stronger at every step he took, going down Constitution-hill, he ventured upon a sort of a declaration, which, though Mrs. Stapleton affected to receive with an air of pleasantry, he thought he saw by her manner was not unexpected; which is a great step towards its being not unpleasing. And indeed, though she could not be said to have given him much encouragement,

I

yet

yet she gave him something so very like it, that he had great reason to be satisfied : so that, upon the whole, both the friends had as agreeable prospects before them as they could desire.—They found the governor sitting by the parlour fire, with what he thought no disagreeable prospect before him, which consisted of three News-papers, four Magazines, and the two Reviews ; some or other of which productions were his constant study. The first were his never-failing companions, as containing what every man wanted to know ; the second he was very partial to, as containing many little detached anecdotes, in which his learning a good deal consisted ; and the last he sometimes looked into, because they enabled him to say something or other, it was not very material whether true or false, about books, without the trouble of reading them attentively ; a reason which influences many greater pretenders to learning than Governor Beville was, and which indeed renders these two monthly twelpenny-worths of criticism the most useful to lawyers clerks, studious journeymen, critical apprentices, country school-masters, and all the

the lower order of literati, of any books extant.

“ Well,” said the governor, “ when am I to give you joy, Sir Charles ?”

“ Gently, gently, my dear Governor,” said Sir Charles, “ I have not got my passport yet ; I have only seen Sir Harry *en passant* to-day, to-morrow is to be the day of business.”

“ How ridiculous it is,” said the governor, “ to make so much ceremony about an affair, when you are all of one mind ! I will venture a wager now, that Norris and his goddess, who have no body’s consent to ask but their own, which by the way is, I dare say, ready for asking for, will make as long a job too, as if they had each of them fathers and mothers, and a whole circle of uncles and aunts into the bargain to perplex them.”

“ Troth,” said Norris, “ it is very likely ; I don’t understand much of forms and ceremonies, but I promise you there shall be none that I can help.”

“ Well, well,” said the governor, “ mind what I say ; I stay in town just six weeks ; and if I don’t see you both
“ fairly

“fairly snickled before I go, I’ll never for-
“give either of you.”

The two gentlemen both promised to do
their best, and retiring to dress before dinner,
left the governor once more to his studies.



CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles has an Audience of Sir Harry, and half carries his Point with Miss Clayton.

IN the evening the gentlemen went all together to make a visit to the Barkers, whom the governor had never seen in their prosperity; and he had too much goodness of heart not to promise himself much pleasure in being witness to the happy change in their situation. Sir Charles promised himself some satisfaction also in introducing the governor to old Mr. Barker, who he imagined would be much taken with him, as his character had some peculiarities in it, which marked it from the common run of men; and he knew Mr. Barker thought the discovery of a character, which had any thing particular in its cast, like the discovering a mine; which, with a little pains in the working, would turn to very good account. He was very right in his conjecture: for when he introduced them to each other, he saw that Mr. Barker eyed the governor with that sort of penetrating look, with
which

which an accurate observer surveys an object which appears to contain something worth notice. There was something indeed in his dress and address so peculiarly his own, as spoke at once a mine for Mr. Barker; and he accordingly attached himself to him, the whole evening, with an attention that won the governor's heart: the consequence of which was, that, during his stay in town, Mr. Barker and he were seldom asunder.—Mrs. Barker informed Sir Charles, that Lord Timon was in town, that she had been that morning to wait on Lady Mary, and was to have the honour of attending her to Carlisle-House the evening but one following. “I am glad of it,” said Sir Charles, “for as I know Miss Clayton intends being there,” [for he now made no secret of his match amongst his friends] “I shall be glad of that opportunity of introducing two of the most amiable women in the world to each other, and of shewing Lady Mary her future neighbour.” Mrs. Barker assured him he could not do her a greater favour, for that she longed for nothing so much as to be known to a lady of whom she had heard so much.

As these two families did not visit at all according to the London stile of visiting, it was late before they parted, and after supper, in spite

spite of all Mrs. Barker could say against it, old Mr. Barker insisted upon smoking a pipe of British-herb with the governor; which they had both lately discovered to be the best thing in the world for the eyes.

The next morning Sir Charles and Mr. Norris betook themselves to their respective posts, one in Brook-Street, the other in Bond-Street. Sir Charles found Sir Harry Clayton had been waiting for him, for he had never recollected that it was drawing-room day, and that Sir Harry was in waiting. His chariot had been some time at the door; but as he knew Sir Charles's business was with him, and longed very much to have matters settled as fast as possible, he waited half an hour beyond his time, in order, if possible, to see him before he went. As soon as Sir Charles therefore arrived, he was conducted into the study, where he found Sir Harry reading a Newspaper, which he had just had time to run to his chair and take up, whilst Sir Charles stood at the door; his post, for the last half hour, having been at the window, with that kind of expecting face, with which a school-boy stands at the gate the morning his father's horses are to fetch him home. Sir Charles began in the usual stile to talk about the morning, and so forth; but Sir Harry, by making
an

an apology for leaving him the day before, and pulling out his watch, which, together with the chariot at the door, he thought might serve as a hint that he was going to leave him again, gave him to understand that he wished him to come to business as soon as possible. Sir Charles was excellent at taking a hint; he began therefore with inquiring after the ladies by way of introduction; and from thence proceeding to some handsome things with regard to Miss Clayton, he got, by a pretty easy transition, to the main business; which he opened with a very honest account of his own circumstances, and concluded with a very generous offer of complying with any demand Sir Harry could make consistently with the necessary provision for a family. Sir Harry, who was by no means himself deficient in point of generosity, after having got over the little surprise which it was necessary such a declaration should throw him into, and made some civil speeches upon the occasion, in which he was still less deficient than in the former point, proceeded to acquaint Sir Charles with the state of Miss Clayton's fortune; what she had in her own power, and what she might hereafter expect from him; he then concluded with saying, that he by no means
wished

wished to prescribe to Sir Charles, but was sure he should be satisfied with whatever offer he should think proper to make. To say the truth, this answer had been advised by Lady Clayton; "For," said she, "I dare say he will offer more than you could ask." A piece of policy which I suppose she had learnt from the lower order of gentry, whose services being of so trifling a nature as to render it difficult to ascertain their real value, they chuse to apply to the generosity of their employers, rather than their justice, by which means, "What your honour pleases," often gets half-a-crown, where the legal demand might have been sixpence. And it succeeded here to a miracle: Sir Charles made an offer so much beyond what Sir Harry expected, that, so far from having any thoughts of asking it, he was in great doubt whether he ought not to refuse it. But it seems Lady Clayton had suspected that his eagerness for the match would draw him in to make some foolish bargain, and had, therefore, made him promise two things; one was, to make no demand, for the reason above given; the other was, to take whatever was offered; unless, which she knew Sir Charles too well to be much in fear of, it should be too little. I dare say, therefore, nothing but having inadvertently made
this

this promise, could have induced Sir Harry to have accepted a settlement for his daughter at least double to what he had any right to expect: as the case stood, he was obliged to comply.

This important business being thus settled to the mutual satisfaction of the parties, Sir Charles went up to the ladies, and Sir Harry went where he ought to have gone an hour before. Whether by accident or design I cannot tell, Sir Charles found Lady Clayton alone in the drawing-room. It might have been expected that a consciousness of the manner in which she had behaved to him the last time they met, would have rendered his first visit a little distressing: but as Sir Charles was by no means of the order of people who love to triumph on those occasions, so neither was Lady Clayton one of those who create difficulties for themselves by an excessive delicacy of sentiment: Sir Charles therefore could not be more ready to forget that she had ever behaved ill to him than she was herself. When therefore he told her the business he had been upon with Sir Harry, and hoped he should have her concurrence in what had been settled between them, she, relying upon her instructions to Sir Harry, found not the least difficulty in saying, that “ she thought the family very
“ much

“ much obliged to him, and that he might be
 “ sure she could not have any objection to an
 “ alliance with any family might be proud of.”
 Sir Charles, who was perfectly well satisfied
 to compromise matters, and forgive her all
 the trouble she had given him, upon condition
 of her giving him no more, was going to
 make proper acknowledgments, when the ar-
 rival of Miss Clayton prevented him.—After
 the first civilities, Lady Clayton had consid-
 eration enough to find out that there are cer-
 tain subjects, which, though they may be
 equally known to three people, so that any
 two of them may converse freely upon them
 in the absence of the third, it is nevertheless
 difficult to enter upon in the presence of all
 three: she therefore thought it might be both
 proper and convenient for her to withdraw.
 And here again that delicacy, which upon these
 occasions puts people upon making forty foolish
 excuses, gave her no trouble at all: why,
 thought she, should I tell a fib and say, I want
 to go for this and that, and t’other, when the
 truth will do just as well? So getting up with
 a laugh, “ I suppose,” said she, “ you would
 “ as lief have my room as my company,” a
 surmise which they did not think proper to
 contradict, she left them without farther
 ceremony.

Every

Every difficulty which had for some time obstructed his happiness, being now removed, Sir Charles, lest any unforeseen accident should arise, was for hastening it as much as possible, and was very earnest with Miss Clayton to fix the day on which she would put him in possession of every thing he held most dear, and by that means put it out of the power of fate or Lady Clayton to do him any farther despite. But, whether it is that young ladies, when they have a blessing within their reach, are not so eager to enjoy it as they were when they thought it impossible to get at it, or, whether the natural timidity of the sex makes them willing to postpone the hour which is to determine the future happiness of their lives, I cannot tell, but the fact is certainly true; as I dare say every man who has tried it well knows, that it is not half so difficult to prevail upon a lady to have one at all, as it is to bring her to fix the day. At length, after a great deal of that rhetoric which hardly any woman can resist, she was brought to a compromise. "Well then," said she, "Sir Charles, I must intrust you with a secret, which you must give me your honour not to divulge till a proper time." Sir Charles was in a humour to promise any thing. "You must know then," said she, "that your
friend

“ friend Norris is teasing my friend Stapleton
 “ just in the same way as you are plaguing
 “ me ; that may be no secret to you, perhaps,
 “ but possibly it may be that she, some time or
 “ other, intends to comply with his request.”
 “ I am rejoiced to hear it,” cried Sir Charles.
 “ O,” said she, “ but you must keep her
 “ counsel, and not give a hint of her resolu-
 “ tion to your friend, till she shall be pleased
 “ to let him know it herself ; and whenever
 “ that happens, upon the same day that she
 “ condescends to make your friend happy,
 “ I think I must determine to take my chance
 “ with you : so now you need not press me
 “ any farther, for you see the day is not in
 “ my power.” Sir Charles finding he could
 get no better terms, was glad to accept of
 these ; so assuring her that he would not suffer
 Norris to have a moment’s rest till he had car-
 ried his point, he took his leave.

CHAP. VII.

A short Chapter, containing the Opening of a very alarming Adventure.

EVERY thing went on smoothly and well for several days, and Miss Clayton, who possibly began to think that her friend had sacrificed enough to punctilio, and had now a right to follow her inclination, had put every thing in great forwardness for the celebration of a day, which she neither expected nor wished to be far off. Mrs. Stapleton, after having said and done every thing that is usual on such occasions, was at length prevailed upon to make Mr. Norris happy. But, as she had not so professedly made preparations for the occasion as her friend had, she had a great deal to do, and was therefore, under the necessity of trespassing upon the patience of the rest of the party for another fortnight; a demand which two, at least, of them found some difficulty in complying with: but neither she, nor her mantua-maker, could dispense with an hour of it, so they were forced to submit, and the important day was fixed accordingly. In the

the mean time the necessary articles of silks, sattins, and lace, were carried on with as much expedition as possible. Poor Mrs. Jenny had so many walks and so many fresh orders for Mrs. Bond, and every thing was to be executed in such a hurry, that at last the inquisitive millener took an opportunity of asking her what all this extraordinary preparation was for? A wedding is the thing in the world upon which ladies women love most to expatiate. Mrs. Jenny therefore, who had every qualification which a lady's woman ought to have, wanted not a second invitation to display her talents upon her favourite topic; so beginning at the first of her lady's acquaintance with Miss Clayton, the first year she lived with her, which was eight years ago last June, who brought her acquainted with Sir Charles Beville, who brought her acquainted with Mr. Norris, to whom she was to be married the next week: she ran on with the whole story, with all its *ifs* and *ands*; to which the millener paid more than ordinary attention. Mrs. Jenny was all this time waiting for a cap, which wanted but a quarter of an hour's work to finish it; but by the time she had finished her story half an hour had elapsed, and the cap still wanting a quarter of an hour to finish it, Mrs. Bond beg-

ged she might lend it, or that Mrs. Jenny would give herself the trouble to call again in the evening, when the cap and some other things should be ready for her to carry home together. Mrs. Jenny chose the latter; and accordingly, as soon as her lady was gone to Sir Harry Clayton's, where the whole party was to spend their evening, she betook herself to Mrs. Bond's.—Mrs. Bond was drinking her tea, and entreated Mrs. Jenny, who wanted not much entreaty, to walk into the back shop and drink a dish with her. She then took an opportunity to set her tongue a going once more, and having made many inquiries about Mr. Norris, and learnt every thing about him which Mrs. Jenny could tell her, which was abundantly sufficient for her purpose, she stepped into the shop to fetch the band-box for her, and at the same time gave her a letter, saying, “ Be so good, Mrs. Jenny, as
“ deliver this to your lady : I am very sorry
“ to give her any uneasiness, but it is absolutely necessary she should be acquainted
“ with some circumstances of which that will
“ inform her.” Mrs. Jenny did not comprehend one word of the speech, nor did Mrs. Bond think proper to explain herself.—Mrs. Jenny's curiosity to know the contents of the letter, made her think that her lady staid very late

late at Sir Harry Clayton's. To say the truth, the party were so happy in one another, that they did not think of breaking up very early : Mr. Norris, in particular, had been in such high spirits, and so entertaining and agreeable, that Mrs. Stapleton felt herself more and more attached to him every minute ; and, to say the truth, almost wished that each of the next five or six days could consist of less than twenty-four hours. As soon as she arrived at home, Mrs. Jenny presented her box ; “ And, Madam,” said she, “ I cannot tell what Mrs. Bond means, but to be sure she has frightened me out of my very wits ; for she desired I would give you this letter, and said it would make you uneasy, and she was very sorry ; but that it was necessary you should know something that is in it.” “ A letter from Mrs. Bond make me uneasy, Jenny !” said Mrs. Stapleton. “ I think I could lay a good wager against that ; but let us see however.” She took the letter, and having run her eye over it, Mrs. Jenny, who watched her looks with much attention, was alarmed to see her colour go and come, and would have given all she was worth in the world to have known the contents of the letter.—Mrs. Stapleton was indeed alarmed, but not sufficiently to throw her off her guard ;

as therefore she thought there might be some mistake, or some villainy in the contents of the letter, she did not chuse to disclose them, till the person most concerned in them had been consulted. She therefore made light of it to her woman, but retired to rest in the greatest discomposure of mind that possibly she had ever experienced. Her sagacious woman, who plainly saw she was disturbed, and also knew that it was not a trifle that could disturb her, was apprehensive something very terrible was the matter, and suffered that worst of all sensations, the fearing that she knew not what would happen.—Certain fears admit of certain comforts; but the fear of one knows not what, knows no alleviation or bounds; which is the reason that the apprehension which old women and children have of spirits and apparitions, is the most dismaying of all fears.—This sort of uncertain apprehension Mrs. Jenny suffered all that night; and as it would have been too much for her to have endured another night, she determined, if her lady was not more communicative in the morning, to make an errand to the millener, to try if she could get any thing out of her. Some dark hints indeed, which Mrs. Bond had dropped in conversation, helped, in some small degree, to ascertain

tain the object of her fears ; but as it directed them to the most formidable of all disasters, something or other happening to prevent her lady's match taking place, that was but small comfort, and she was willing to find some other object for them if she could. A wedding in the family seemed to promise such a scene of mirth and jollity, that it was no wonder if, next to that of her own sweetheart, Mrs. Jenny thought the loss of it the worst accident that could happen. Both mistress and maid probably found this the longest night they had ever passed in their lives. At length, however, the morning arrived, which was to disperse or confirm all their apprehensions.

CHAP. VIII.

Continuation of the Adventure.

THAT you may not, reader, be at any loss to comprehend the meaning of this perplexing affair, which is now going to be opened to you, I would advise you to recollect, or, if your memory happens to be weak, which if you have either a great deal of wit, or none at all, may possibly be the case, to turn back to the first book of these Memoirs, in which Mr. Norris relates the adventures which happened to him in the early part of his life.—There ;—now you have done that, you will be very well able to understand what follows.

Mrs. Stapleton arose the next morning about her usual time, but not with her usual chearful serenity of mind, nor yet with that agreeable hurry of spirits, which the preparations she had been, for the last week, engaged in, used to excite. During the time of breakfast, Mrs. Jenny observed she was thoughtful, uneasy, and even pettish; a kind of humour in which she had never before seen her, during the eight years that she had

had lived with her. Several times had she determined to beg to be permitted to share her anxiety, but an unusual austerity sat upon her countenance, which as often deterred her from her purpose. At length a tear, which she thought she saw stealing down her cheek, had well nigh made her break through all restraint, for she really loved her mistress, when the arrival of Mr. Norris again prevented her.

Generous minds never harbour a suspicion of an honest man, till he has had an opportunity of answering his accusers. Mrs. Stapleton therefore received Mr. Norris with her usual kindness, not to say affection: she neither indeed was able, nor endeavoured to hide the uneasiness that hung upon her mind; and his penetration and love both combined to shew it him in an instant. "What am I
" to think, my dearest Madam," said he,
" of an uneasiness which I see in your coun-
" tenance for the first time, when I should
" hope, if possible, to see in it an additional
" chearfulness?" "I know not," said she,
" what to think of it myself; it is not abso-
" lutely without reason, and yet it is, I dare
" say, so very near it, that I almost blame
" myself for giving way to it. This letter,
" which I received last night, will possibly
" explain."——Mr. Norris took the letter,

ter, and, casting his eye over the superscription, turned as pale as death, and had hardly strength to read what follows.

“ Madam,

“ I HOPE you will have the goodness to
“ pardon my troubling you with this, but
“ an affair of the utmost consequence renders it absolutely necessary.

“ I am, Madam, informed, that you are
“ upon the point of marriage with a Mr.
“ Norris, of Northamptonshire. I am very
“ sorry that he should have any thoughts of
“ entering into such an engagement with
“ you, as he must be conscious that he is
“ under the strongest engagements with another person. It is many years, Madam,
“ since Mr. Norris and myself were connected with each other ; but as I have
“ now in my possession more than one promise of marriage under his hand, notwithstanding he was pleased to forsake me upon a bare suspicion, I cannot think of suffering him to enter into an engagement
“ with another person, whilst I am alive and
“ single. Distressed circumstances, and various other incidents, have been the occasion
“ of my assuming the name of Bond, to
“ which I have no claim ; but he will know
“ per-

" perfectly well who I am, when I have the
 " honour to subscribe myself,

" Madam,

" Your obliged humble servant,

" FRANCES LOVEILL."

Nothing could equal the astonishment of Mr. Norris when he had finished this extraordinary letter. " Do you know this person ?" said Mrs. Stapleton. " But too well," replied he ; " what she says is undoubtedly true, " and I know not well how to get over her " claim ; but of this I am convinced, that " when you hear the history of that trans- " action, you will not only acquit me of any " design to deceive you, but will not won- " der if the circumstance of my letters " being in the possession of this abandoned " woman had slipped my memory." Mrs. Stapleton saw no appearance of deceit in his countenance, and begged he would acquaint her with every particular. He began with informing her that Sir Charles and Governor Beville were already perfectly well acquainted with this transaction ; and then proceeded to tell her the literal facts as they are recorded in the first book of these Memoirs.

During the recital, Mrs. Stapleton recovered her spirits sufficiently to be much divert-

ed with many parts of it: she could not help comparing the unexperienced eager young man, with the sedate, considerate person before her; and, to say the truth, she saw such a natural goodness of heart in the former, as was, in her esteem, no less amiable than the more ripened qualifications of the latter; in short, so far was this incident from lessening Mr. Norris in her esteem, that, by shewing the goodness of his disposition at all times of his life, it rendered him more dear to her than ever. She was so far from blaming him for having been deceived, that she would have accused him of a want of sensibility if he had escaped the snare laid for him, and would have thought the unsuspecting open-heartedness of a young man, very ill supplied by the prudent caution of an old one. She was of opinion that every age has its peculiar qualifications, and even virtues, and that they lose great part of their value, by being confounded or misplaced. She was, in short, thoroughly sensible of the justice of that observation of Yorick's in that *Journey*, which is of more value than all the voyages and travels which ever were journalized, (which observation, by the way, would have sounded ten times better, if the author had found or invented an expression for it, which had not a certain indelicacy.

delicacy of idea annexed to it) “ *If a man has not a certain cullibility in his nature, so much the worse.*”—Perfectly convinced therefore of Mr. Norris’s worth, and more than ever charmed with his character, all her consideration was turned upon the means of extricating him and herself from this difficulty, which had so unexpectedly sprung up to impede an union which had every prospect of felicity attending it.—The most obvious means which occurred to her, was to try if the universal panacea might not reach the case, that is to say, whether a good sum of money might not prevail on her to relinquish her claim, from which she could not hope, in the end, to reap any other benefit: and this she was the rather inclined to believe would have the effect, because the woman, by dropping a hint in her letter, of her being in distressed circumstances, seemed to point out this natural way for Mr. Norris to take of relieving both her and himself. But Norris, who well knew the malignity of her disposition, could not help being of a different opinion. He knew that she had a sufficient share of that diabolical glee which rises from the thoughts of tormenting; and that, though interest might have some share in this mischievous claim, the pleasure of disappointing, or at least protracting, the
hap-

happiness of a man who had disappointed her, had probably a much greater ; and, in this view, he saw more difficulty in compromising the affair, than Mrs. Stapleton was aware of ; for he was too good a master of the human heart not to know, that a regard to interest may be satisfied, but a thirst after revenge never. In spite therefore of all Mrs. Stapleton could say to encourage him, he was very much disconcerted, and could not help fearing a tedious delay to the completion of his wishes.—Another cause also concurred to make his situation very uneasy to him, the fear of the conjectures which would be made amongst his acquaintance with regard to this sudden delay of a match which they were in daily expectation of seeing completed. To hope to keep it a secret, when it was known to a millener and a chambermaid, was to hope to conceal the sun-rising ; and to hope to have the real cause known and believed, without any misrepresentations to the disadvantage of either him or Mrs. Stapleton, or both, was as vain ; he was therefore apprehensive, and not without reason, that ill-natured people, and probably the woman herself, would not be backward in raising reports which it would give him pain to suffer, and which, at the same time, it would not be possible to contradict. Mrs. Stapleton

pleton attempted both to reason and laugh him out of these apprehensions: "With regard to yourself," said she, "your character is too well established with those who know you, to be hurt by any reports which a disappointed and violent woman can raise; and with regard to me, I hope I am nearly in the same situation; but if not, I live, Mr. Norris, to my own heart, and as long as that does not reproach me, I set very slightly by the opinion of the world, from whom I have nothing either to hope or fear."

Norris applauded the justice of her sentiments, and endeavoured to imitate her unconcern, but without effect. In this perplexity it was agreed between them, that the first step should be to consult Sir Charles on the affair; and if he would have the goodness to undertake it, to put the whole management into his hands, as he would probably be able to conduct it with more coolness than Mr. Norris himself might; for, to say the truth, he found himself too much exasperated against the woman, to be sure of keeping his temper within the bounds which prudence might require. With this view he went home to consult Sir Charles. He found him and young Mr. Barker together; and as the long intimacy which he had had with the latter,

ter, gave him a right to his confidence, he entered into a detail of the affair to them both. Sir Charles was entirely of Mrs. Stapleton's opinion, that the woman could have no other end in view, than extorting a sum of money, which he was also of opinion it would be necessary to comply with ; to which Norris, though with some reluctance, agreed, provided Sir Charles would undertake the management of the affair, that he might not be under any necessity of seeing her. Sir Charles very willingly undertook to talk with Miss Loveill, and for that purpose proposed sending for her to his house the next day ; and, as Mr. Norris himself had declared against seeing her, he begged Mr. Barker would give him his assistance. Mr. Barker, who had been intent upon examining the letter which Mrs. Stapleton had received, very readily promised his assistance ; but as he had a very particular engagement for the next day, begged the conference might be postponed to the day following. Mr. Norris, who was on thorns till it was over, wished him to wave his engagement ; but as he said it was of such a nature, that it was impossible to defer it, Norris was obliged to submit to the little delay, and the day but one following was accordingly fixed for the meeting.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

Conclusion of the Adventure.

THE next day Sir Charles himself wrote a letter to Mrs. Bond, or, as she again chose to call herself, Miss Loveill; wherein he told her, that his friendship for Mr. Norris had induced him to take the trouble of conversing with her upon the subject of a claim, which, though he little expected ever to find revived, he was nevertheless conscious had some foundation; but as an affair of this kind could not so properly be discussed by letter, he begged to see her at his house the next day, at whatever hour she would appoint.

To this letter she sent a very pathetic answer; apologizing for such parts of her past conduct, as she was conscious Mr. Norris, and therefore Sir Charles, knew wanted it; and persisting in her affectionate regard for Mr. Norris, to which she imputed her having constantly persevered in a single state, tho' often much pressed to change it, by those who would have removed her out of the necessity

cessity of earning her living by labour; of all which she promised to give Sir Charles a more ample account the next day, at five o'clock in the afternoon. Sir Charles sent Mr. Barker the hour of appointment, and was rather surprised to hear that he was gone out of town. Before the appointed time, however, he arrived. Sir Charles had given orders, that as soon as the lady came, she should be conducted into the library, within which there was a little dressing-room, whither Mr. Norris chose to retire; for, though he did not care to encounter her himself, his curiosity and anxiety made him wish to be witness to what passed upon the occasion.

Soon after the hour appointed Miss Loveill arriv'd, was conducted into the library, and in a few minutes Sir Charles came to her. Knowing her character, he could not help being struck with the decency of her appearance, the humility of her look, and the elegance of her manner. "I am sorry, Madam," said he, "to have the necessity of introducing myself to you upon an affair which cannot be pleasing either to you or myself; but my friend has desired me to undertake a task for him, to which he found himself unequal." She made some civil reply with regard to Sir Charles's character,

rafter, and concluded with an air of surprise;
 "Am not I, Sir, to have the satisfaction of
 "seeing Mr. Norris?" "No man," replied
 Sir Charles, "Mrs. Bond, loves to say an
 "uncivil thing to any lady less than Mr.
 "Norris, much less to a lady who once gave
 "him reason to think well of her." The re-
 ply was equivocal; and the door opening at
 that instant, she rose in a hurry, as if ex-
 pecting to see Mr. Norris; but upon Mr. Bar-
 ker entering, and Sir Charles introducing him
 to her as another friend of Mr. Norris's, she
 sat down with a visible disappointment in her
 countenance, and from that instant her
 whole air and deportment was changed: the
 affected humility which she had assumed dis-
 appeared in an instant, and she began to talk,
 not in the stile of one who solicits a favour,
 but of one who makes a demand. "I see,
 "gentlemen," said she, "that I am to ex-
 "pect no favour from Mr. Norris: after
 "all the injuries he has done me, he even
 "has the barbarity to refuse to see me.
 "Well, be it so. — I must then rely
 "upon the justice of my claim; and as
 "long as I am in possession of his letters, I
 "am not afraid that his abilities, or the coun-
 "tenance you, Sir Charles, are pleased to
 "shew him, should screen him from the
 "law."

“law.” “Pray, Mrs. Bond,” said Sir Charles—“Before you proceed in your question,” interrupted she, “I must beg leave, Sir, to inform you, once for all, that I have no title to that name, though I have, for particular reasons, gone by it for some years; my name, Sir, is Loveill.”——

“Pray, Madam,” said Mr. Barker, “may I take the liberty to ask you how you came at first to take the name of Bond?”

“Why, Sir,” replied she, “when your friend Mr. Norris, after entering into the most solemn engagements with me which can bind a man to a woman, except that at the altar, thought proper, upon the pretence of some innocent gallantry between me and a young man of fashion, to whom my family had obligations, to desert me in the most barbarous manner, and take every pains to ruin my reputation, as well as my comfort; I found that he had succeeded so far in his endeavours, as to exasperate those, who were disposed to be my friends, against me, to such a degree, that, in a little time, I found myself in distressed circumstances, without a friend in the world who would give me any assistance. They who had disapproved of my connection with him, and who, before that, were

“both

" both able and willing to assist me, made
 " that an excuse for throwing me off; and
 " others, who had no such pretence, turned
 " even his cruel neglect of me to my disad-
 " vantage, by saying, that if I had not, some
 " how or other, behaved ill, he would never
 " have forsaken me. In this dreadful situa-
 " tion, which you see, Gentlemen, was en-
 " tirely the consequence of my unhappy at-
 " tachment to him, I found it necessary to
 " apply to some means for a livelihood. The
 " skill I had in needle-work, suggested the mil-
 " lery branch, as the most probable resource;
 " and I accordingly got myself recommended
 " to Mrs. Cooke, at Bath, to work journey-
 " work. But, from a latent spark of pride,
 " which, in people not meanly descended,
 " no meanness of circumstances can extin-
 " guish, I was not willing to appear under
 " my own name in a rank of life so much
 " below what I had been accustomed to." Mr.
 Barker sighed; she mistook his motive and
 thought it a token of some rising compassion:
 she therefore by way of encouraging him not
 to suppress it, pulled out her handkerchief and
 proceeded, " Think, Sir, think, Gentlemen,
 " how cutting a thing it must be to be shun-
 " ned by all your acquaintance, and bring a
 " disgrace, by a mean employment, upon a
 " family

“ family which has lived with distinction in
“ the world ; 'tis worse than poverty itself.”
Mr. Barker sighed again. Bravo, thought
she, and wiped her eyes. “ Think, Gentle-
“ men,” continued she, “ of the misery of
“ such a fall, and you will not be surprised
“ that I wished, if possible, to conceal my-
“ self under a borrowed name. It is to that,
“ and that only, that I owe the name of
“ Bond, which was the first name that hap-
“ pened to occur, and which is the rather
“ remarkable, as I do not recollect that I
“ know any person of the name amongst all
“ my acquaintance.” Mr. Barker, at the
conclusion of this last speech, felt some emo-
tions which he found it difficult to suppress,
but they did not arise from pity. “ Accord-
“ ing to your account, Madam,” said Sir
Charles, “ you have met with some hard-
“ ships, which, however, I can by no means
“ think you have any right to attribute to Mr.
“ Norris.” “ No, Sir !” exclaimed she
with violence : “ Was it not owing to him
“ that I lost——” “ Let us not be warm,
“ Mrs. Loveill,” interrupted Sir Charles ;
“ I shall not now enter into any inquiry up-
“ on what grounds it was that Mr. Norris
“ declined pursuing his connection with you ;
“ it is sufficient to say, that he is determined
“ to

" to keep to the resolution he made many
 " years ago of never seeing you more: what
 " use therefore do you intend to make of his
 " letters? and what are your expectations
 " from him?" Tears of passion now took
 the place of those which she had squeezed out
 as incitements to pity. " I know, Sir Charles
 " Beville," cried she; " I know that you,
 " Sir, think I am to be bribed to part with
 " what I have a just claim to, and that mo-
 " ney is my view in offering this claim at
 " such a time. You are mistaken, Sir, it
 " is not money I want; I am still, poor as
 " you may esteem me, in a situation to give
 " Mr. Norris as much uneasiness as he can
 " give me; and be assured, Sir, that no pal-
 " try consideration of interest shall ever in-
 " duce me to give up that power. Mr.
 " Norris, Sir, you may inform him from me,
 " shall never marry where his heart leads
 " him; I, Sir, will for ever forbid the banns;
 " and if he perjures himself to obtain a li-
 " cence, I will persecute him through every
 " court of justice with all the rigour that dis-
 " appointment can urge." " I would be
 " glad," said Mr. Barker, " to ask Mrs.
 " Bond——" " I again tell you, Sir,"
 cried she, " that I have no such name."
 " Till I have as good reasons, Madam," re-
 " plied

plied Mr. Barker, "for calling you by any
" other name, as I have for calling you by that,
" I shall give you no other." He said this
with so penetrating a look, that the lady,
who had looked upon Sir Charles as the prin-
cipal person, and till that instant had paid ve-
ry little attention to Mr. Barker, began to be
a little startled: she looked earnestly at him,
and asked him, not without some hesitation,
" Pray, Sir, who—who are you?"—" My
" name, Madam," replied he, " is Barker,
" and possibly in one of those courts of judi-
" cature, to which you threaten to apply for
" relief against a man whom you have so
" highly injured, you may see me again. I
" am, Mrs. Bond, a very free spoken man,
" therefore you must not think of going,
" Madam," (for she was beginning to move,
possibly from a presentiment that Mr. Barker had
something disagreeable to say to her) " before
" I have told you a little of my mind. I have
" listened with great patience, though not
" less indignation, to your story; in which
" you have, with the most unparalleled ef-
" frontery, thrown the effects of your own
" ill conduct upon Mr. Norris. I will not,
" Madam, descend so low as to recapitulate
" any of the actions of your vile life, with
" the whole of which, however, you may be
" assured

“ assured I am thoroughly well acquainted :
 “ only your claim upon my friend concerns
 “ me, and to that only I shall therefore con-
 “ fine myself. What might have been your
 “ motives for daring to set up a claim,
 “ which you have not the least shadow of a
 “ pretence to support, I cannot tell ; it may
 “ be revenge, in which you will be disap-
 “ pointed ; it may be money, in which you
 “ will be more disappointed. I am so well ac-
 “ quainted with the circumstances of your
 “ claim, that if a shilling would purchase
 “ Mr. Norris’s promissory letters from you,
 “ he should not give it.” During this speech,
 she sat in the most perfect astonishment ; nor
 was Sir Charles without some degree of won-
 der ; for as he was ignorant of the grounds
 that Mr. Barker went upon, he could not
 guess what was his design. Mrs. Bond at
 length recollected herself, and began to sus-
 pect that possibly this behaviour was meant to
 intimidate her ; to which suspicion she was
 the more encouraged, from considering the
 mild way in which Sir Charles had treated
 her, which seemed calculated to try first to
 compromise matters : confirmed therefore in
 her suspicion, she began an answer in a very
 high tone and stile ; which Mr. Barker pre-
 sently put a stop to, by saying, “ Look ye,
 VOL. II. M “ Mrs.

“ Mrs. Bond, I cannot pretend to answer
 “ such a torrent as I see you are going to
 “ pour out, without some assistance; but be-
 “ fore you proceed to insist upon your claim
 “ to Mr. Norris with so much vehemence,
 “ you will do well to find some means of
 “ getting rid of that which a gentleman,
 “ whom I brought this morning with me
 “ from Stoney-Stratford, lays to you.” Upon
 saying this he opened the door, and calling,
 “ Pray, Sir, walk this way,” in walked the
 very identical Mr. Bond, whom we left some
 time ago playing *Chamont* at Stoney-Stratford;
 who, stepping up to the lady, told her, in the
 true accent of *the country*, “ My dear soule,
 “ it’s myself that is very glad to see you,
 “ when I found that I had lost you so long.”
 The rage, the astonishment, the confusion of
 the lady, could be equalled by nothing but
 the surprise of Sir Charles, who was quite
 unacquainted with the discovery Mr. Barker
 had made: nor did the transported Norris find
 it an easy thing to confine himself in his
 dressing-room; but, as he thought there might
 be possibly even more danger in encountering
 Mrs. Bond now, than there was before, he
 suppressed his joy, and continued to lie *perdue*
 till she was gone. When Sir Charles had a
 little recovered his surprise, he turned to Mr.
 Bond,

Bond, and said, " Sir, you have, by a strange
 " accident, discovered your wife: she has
 " been much to blame in this transaction;
 " but as she is now settled in a good way of
 " business, possibly kind usage, and a decent
 " provision, may bring her to reflect, and see
 " the error she has been guilty of; in which
 " case you may assure yourself you shall not
 " want my future favour. You would do
 " well to quit your rambling life, and settle
 " to some more reputable way of procuring a
 " maintenance, and then you shall not want
 " my protection. As to you, Madam, I do
 " not expect your spirit to subside in an in-
 " stant; but whenever you can bring your-
 " self to desire your misconduct to be forgot-
 " ten, I am very sure neither Mr. Norris nor
 " his friends will wish to remember it." Mr.
 Barker and he then retired, and left the hus-
 band and wife at liberty to return home to-
 gether or separate, as they could agree the
 matter between them.

CHAP. X.

The Conclusion of the Book, with the Reader's Assistance.

IT will be easily imagined that Mr. Norris's acknowledgments to Mr. Barker, for his care and ingenuity in the management of this discovery, could be equalled by nothing but his surprise at it. It was, indeed, no wonder, that the name of an itinerant player, whom they had never seen before, and never expected to see again, should not strike either him or Sir Charles. But Mr. Barker, who had known him before, and had learnt his history from his own mouth at Stratford, as also that of his wife, no sooner heard that this lady, who seemed, from Mr. Norris's account of her, to be an *Avanturiere*, had gone by the name of Bond, than it immediately struck him that this must be the wife of his *quondam* acquaintance: but, lest he should be mistaken, he determined to say nothing of his suspicion, till he was confirmed in the truth of it. Upon the strength of this, when he left Sir Charles and Mr. Norris, he went directly to Mrs.

Mrs. Bond's; and under pretence of bespeaking some ruffles, he got so full a view of her person, as to be able to describe it with some degree of certainty. He then immediately set out for Stoney-Stratford; and, by singular good fortune, found that the company had not left the place; and, which was still more unexpected, that Mr. Bond had not left the company. He described the lady so exactly to her husband, that he had not a moment's doubt of her identity; nor, when he heard the comfortable way in which she was settled, had he a moment's hesitation with regard to accompanying Mr. Barker to town, in order to take possession of the goods and chattles which he was informed she was possessed of, by the favour probably of those friends, of whom he was apprehensive she had too many. Whatever objection, however, he might have to the friends, he had none at all to that part of their friendship which consisted in making good presents. Without therefore paying the least attention to the distress the company would be in for somebody to supply his place, in the very travelling dress in which he was prepared to play Archer, he set out for London with Mr. Barker, and made his appearance, as we have seen in the last chapter; by which he relieved Mr. Norris from the most uncomfortable

able dilemma he had ever experienced in the course of his life. It will be easily imagined also that Mr. Norris lost not a moment in acquainting Mrs. Stapleton with this unexpected success of the negociation; and that not only she, but all their friends, felt the greatest joy at finding nothing more to impede the celebration of two weddings, which promised an addition of happiness to every individual connected with any of the parties more immediately concerned. In short every thing that remains will be so easily imagined, that it goes very much against the grain to tell the sagacious reader what he can just as well tell me. To say the truth, there is nothing more difficult than to wind up a story of this kind with any tolerable degree of satisfaction to a reader, when the way is made so plain to him, all difficulties removed, and all projects gathered to a head; so that he can no more mistake what he is to come to, than he can his way from Hyde-park-corner to Kensington. And for this reason, I take it for granted, that the last chapter of a novel, and the last scene of a play, are never read or attended to.—If any thirsty reader, therefore, like the honest politician, who always began with the title of his news-paper, and ended with the printer's name at the bottom, should get as far

far as this page, I beg he will be courteous enough to lend me his assistance: and, as describing of wedding ceremonies is not so much my talent as it was Mr. Richardson's, let him be so good as take the two brides and the two bridegrooms, together with Sir Harry and Lady Clayton, Mr. Barker, Mr. and Mrs. J. Barker, Governor Beville, and, if he has occasion for them, Lord Timon and Lady Mary, and Lady Mary Warren, Sir Charles's cousin; and, after having marshalled them in as many coaches as he thinks proper, convey them safe to St. George's church, and from thence, either to Sir Charles's or Sir Harry's house, in either town or country, which ever pleases him best; and then let him sit down, think over all his acquaintance, and find a group of happier people if he can.

F I N I S.

9 MR 53